COMMENTARY

PRAGUE: I SAW IT HAPPEN TWICE

An Eye-Witness Account of the Communist Coup

G. E. R. GEDYE

I AM standing on a great square before a vast Gothic building—the city hall—in the heart of a medieval city. Courtyards with renaissance colonnades and galleries open out from a maze of narrow, tortuous alleyways just wide enough for three—sometimes only for two—a maze where one can wander for an hour and always return to where one started. The cobbled square is lightly covered with frozen snow, trampled black by the endless procession slowly winding around it. In the center is evidence of progress—parked lorries, tanks, and armored cars. Boys in gray-green uniforms are quietly unloading the lorries, glancing occasionally with curiosity, nervousness, or contempt at the endless stream of people. By the pavement stand peasant girls holding great baskets of "snowdrops." Everyone buys a bunch. Silently, with streaming eyes, men and women drop them on the grave beneath the walls of the city hall where lies a nameless man who died, no one knows where or when. . . . The tears, the snowdrops are not for the unknown warrior. He is a symbol, an excuse. In my pocket is a paper bearing a winged swastika. After having hidden me for ten days, a British military attaché has managed to get this out of his German opposite number, who does not like the Gestapo. It tells me that I can go while the going is good—tonight or never—over the frontier into Poland. . . . The flower girl murmurs "Smutny, smutny"—"Sad, sad," and thus, on this bleak day of March 1939, I take my farewell of Czechoslovakia as the Czechoslovaks take farewell of liberty, both of us believing that this winter of slavery will also pass in time.

That was just nine years ago. In between, the promise has been fulfilled, liberty and democracy, free speech and a free press have been restored to this little country—for a brief three years. Today it has lost all these again. Once more I stand before the noble Gothic building, now partially ruined. Once again the great square is filled with armed

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G. E. R. GEDYE has several times had the unhappy experience of being on the spot when democracy went down before totalitarianism. He was in Vienna in 1938, at the time of the Anschluss; he was in Prague in 1939, when Czechoslovakian democracy was sacrificed to Hitler. And he was in Prague again this year when Czechoslovakia's three short years of postwar freedom came to an end. This description of the Communist coup was written on the scene. Mr. Gedye is one of the most highly regarded liberal political journalists in Europe, and is well known to American readers for his work before the war as Austrian and Russian correspondent for the *New York Times* and for his books *The Rape of Austria* and *Betrayal in Central Europe*. He was born in Somerset, England, in 1890.

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men. They wear civilian clothes with red brassards on their arms and carry brand new rifles. The Communist factory militia has been brought on to the streets to show the people of Prague that they had better forget their dreams of liberty and democracy.

THE rifles are not needed. The Czechs have learned their bitter lesson: that democratic liberties are things which a little country set amidst mammoth states may cherish, but for which it is impossible to fight—at least, unaided. And this time there are no snowdrops. The tears fall only when Jan Masaryk atones for his first surrender to the putschists by leaping to his death from a window of the Czernin Palace. Once, indeed, the Czechs were eager to fight for freedom—in September 1938, when, at the threat of invasion by mighty Germany, they doused their street lamps, left their meals half eaten, and, truly the happy warriors, leaped to arms. I was among them that night when the Berchtesgaden Conference broke down and the Western powers who had been warning them against "provoking Hitler" told them "We can no longer forbid you to prepare." And then, a few days later—Munich, when the British and French ministers, on the orders of Chamberlain and Daladier, pushed their way into the bedroom of President Benes and browbeat him until he consented to cancel the defense preparations, to yield up the cherished "Little Maginot" line, and to let German soldiers in to within half an hour's motor run of his capital.

I saw the Czechs, tearful and cursing as they stood beneath the loudspeakers and heard the steps by which they were to render themselves defenceless at the insistence of Britain and France.

I think it was on that day that the Czechs lost their faith in their ability to resist aggression. In 1938 they suffered for daring to demand independence and democracy in the area claimed as *Lebensraum* by totalitarian Germany. Today they have been taught the futility of such dreams in the "outer zone" of totalitarian Russia.

Whose shall be the hand to cast the first stone at the Czechs for failing to defend their liberties? Britain and France cannot evade responsibility for the lesson of Munich. True, the "Voice of America" daily urged the Czechs to defend democracy. And the Czechs indeed feared Communist dictatorship—but above all they feared a revived Germany.

In Prague I was shown files of documents alleged to have been obtained by Czech agents in Sudeten-German centers in American-occupied Germany. Whatever one's views of the morality of the harsh expulsion of three million Sudetens robbed of all their property, there can be no question as to the inexpediency of today permitting or encouraging these unfortunates, not to settle as best they can in Germany, but to press propaganda for a forcible return to the Sudetenland, for its re-annexation by Germany, and the consequent destruction of Czechoslovakia. I saw a photostat of a poster of September 1947 which was displayed in the Algau district (American) on the very frontiers of Czechoslovakia. "Join the pilgrimage to High Mass tomorrow, with the slogan 'We demand our Fatherland back!'" I saw copies of circulars allegedly issued by the "Religious Help Center, Stresemannstrasse 36, Frankfurt-am-Main" (the "capital" of the American Zone), containing the phrases: "God give us back our Fatherland. . . . Father Reichenberger is working for the Cause in America." And I saw what was said to be a "top secret" circular from the "Sudeten-German Freikorps" dated September 4, 1947, urging the recruiting of youths into "gymnastic" classes where "ex-officers and soldiers will train us in everything necessary. . . . The greatest caution is called for . . . . Czecho is about to collapse."

I cannot vouch for the authenticity of these documents, which might just conceivably have been forged for a Czech Communist campaign, although I do not believe it. What I can vouch for is that they looked authentic, were couched in the authentic language of pan-German Nazis, and that I know from past experience just what such

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"gymnastic" classes are. What says America? If these documents are genuine, her authorities must be tolerating their circulation.

Czech Communists have to thank Britain for another good weapon. Mosley, one hears in London, is a negligible quantity. Not in Prague, or anywhere among the hundred and twenty million Europeans behind the Iron Curtain, where the fact that Mosley is at large and able to pour out his poison while police protect him against public indignation, is a potent Communist weapon against Labor Britain. No use here to put forward the arguments about equal democratic rights for all ("What, for those who have sworn to destroy democracy?") or that facism can never win in sober Britain ("Did not sober German democrats say the same thing in 1930 about Hitler?"): The Czechs are hysterical about these things, misunderstand and exaggerate their importance? Perhaps. But this outweighs everything Britain spends on cultural propaganda—for which international Communism, now working for the destruction of democracy in Western Europe, is deeply grateful.

THE curtain rose on the prelude to this new tragedy of Czechoslovakia last June, when she shocked the Kremlin by accepting the invitation to the Marshall Plan Conference. With the strong Communist parliamentary minority of thirty-eight per cent assisted by crypto-Communists running the Social Democrats, Russia had believed the country was in the bag. It was good propaganda to allow her only satellite where Communists had gained strength through democratic, instead of through fraudulent, elections to play at democracy for some years. Czechoslovakia was Russia's shop window, where a real parliament, and democracy were temptingly displayed.

Overnight the Czechs' illusions were smashed. They had forgotten that these goods in the window were only dummies to attract woolly-minded Western customers. They thought they were free to decide that they needed the Marshall Plan. Among those who thought this were even some Communist ministers. No wonder the Kremlin was shocked. Not even all Czech Communists could be trusted! At a word from Stalin, acceptance of the invitation was cancelled.

The Kremlin was placated but not reassured. Elections were approaching. Russia's grip must be so strengthened that it could never again be challenged. The Communists, though strong, were still a minority. They enjoyed socialist support through a working arrangement which sometimes failed to work. People were restive in the factories. In 1945 the Communists had seized key factory positions, having been the best organized, best armed, and the most daring of the resistance groups. The Red Army had increased their armaments. Their Moscow-trained organizers had been given precise objectives and seized them before the other parties realized what was afoot. At the outset the Communists had captured URO—the single, centralized Revolutionary Trade Union. Hence the big Communist poll in 1946. But now the workers were grumbling about Moscow's rigid grip. The innate Czech instinct for democracy was reasserting itself and strengthening democratic socialism. The Communists countered with factory terror—workers were forced to join the party, to remain within the Communist camp.

But after a preliminary rush to cover within the Communist party, there was a reverse movement into the opposite camp when it seemed that surrender to Russia on the Marshall Plan might not mean surrender to Communism at home. The Communists decided on a coup.

THE leader of the Social Democrats was Zdenek Fierlinger, a trained diplomat. I knew him well when, as minister to Vienna, and still a democratic socialist, he did his utmost in February 1934 to save arrested Austrian Social Democrats from the gallows of Dollfuss, Starhemberg, and the brutal Major Fey. Some Austrian socialists then on the run owed their lives to him and to the "Czechoslovak" passports that got them over the frontier. When I met him in Moscow in 1939, where he was Czechoslovak

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minister, he was disillusioned and embittered by the betrayal of democratic Czechoslovakia by France and Britain. Representatives of the countries which had facilitated Hitler's rape of Czechoslovakia ignored him. Not so the Narkomindel, Russia's Foreign Office. Its astute chiefs kept up close unofficial relations with Fierlinger until the Russo-German Pact, and when that Nazi-Communist honeymoon ended, Fierlinger returned as Czechoslovak ambassador—and as a whole-hearted backer of Soviet policy and Communism. As such he was Czechoslovakia's first postwar premier.

Here then was an enthusiastic ally. On September 29 last, the Communist Premier, Clement Gottwald, and Fierlinger moved swiftly. Without consulting the Socialist party executive, they issued a totally unauthorized declaration that "the two parties" had agreed to present a single front on all political questions. Jubilantly the Communists cried out that fusion was on the way—as indeed it was. At the same time they tried an unsuccessful putsch against the Democratic party in Slovakia. But a Socialist congress met at Brno in November, and the democratic Socialists purged their ranks of the "cryptos." Fierlinger was turned out of the chairmanship of the party and many of his followers lost office with him. The party wanted to elect Dr. Majer, a right-wing Socialist, but feared to provoke the Communists too far. A left-winger, Minister of Industry Bohumil Lausman, was finally chosen.

Now the Kremlin was seriously alarmed. The Socialists were no longer struggling behind the scenes to ensure the survival of a measure of independence and democracy. They had nailed their colors to the masthead and had mutinied against the Communists' fifth column. Soon after Brno, Lausman authorised me to quote him: "You need have no fears for the independence of the Czech Social Democrats. Since Brno, the workers are flocking to our colors. This will be reflected in the May election results." He was confirmed by the unofficial polls which most Czechoslovak parties and some foreign embassies hold from time to time. The highest percentage which even the Communist polls forecast for their party at the elections was 35 per cent instead of the existing 38 per cent. For their plans to succeed they needed at least 51 per cent and had boasted that they would get it. In January there began a steady decrease in the estimates of their strength, the lowest estimate being 30 per cent. "Free and unfettered" elections would spell disaster for the Communists.

EARLY in February the non-Communist parties realized that something was brewing. The Communist "cold putsch" appeared to have been fixed for February 29. The Communists, of course, "discovered" more and more "plots" but they were not allowed to have it all their own way. Three non-Communist ministers had received explosive parcels. The Minister of Justice, Dr. Prokop Drtina, arrested the Communist party Secretary of Olomouc as the responsible party. The Communist Minister of the Interior, Vaclav Nosek, released him. Dr. Drtina had him arrested again and Nosek again released him. Meantime a Communist arms dump was found in Olomouc.

The Communists arrested a number of Czechs who had served in Britain during the war, accusing them of the usual "plot" in the service of "foreign powers." The "plot" lost its allure when Dr. Drtina and the Deputy Premier Petr Zenkl revealed that a convict had been "borrowed" from prison by officers of the secret police. They had introduced him to two pseudo "American-Czechs" and told him: "You will go with these men and try secretly to recruit people to resist an expected Communist putsch, saying that Zenkl and Drtina are backing you. Your sentence is remitted."

The full crisis broke over what has been the cornerstone of Communist triumphs in every country in the Russian orbit—the "Communizing" of the police through a Communist Minister of the Interior. On February 12 the Czech Socialist party's Secretary-General, Krajina, told Parliament that a Cabinet meeting had established that the

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"agents of foreign powers" were really *agents provocateurs* of the secret police. Another deputy revealed that police officials had to pay weekly visits to Communist headquarters for instructions. On February 16 the Communist chairman of URO, Antonin Zapotocky (today a Deputy Premier), said: "If Parliament does not accept URO's demands, away with Parliament!"

By a majority decision the Cabinet decided on February 13 that Nosek must cancel the dismissal of eight leading Prague police officials whom he had replaced by Communists, and instructed him to report to a Cabinet meeting on February 17 that he had complied. When that day came, Nosek failed to appear, pleading ill-health. The Communist Minister of Information, Vaclav Kopecky (Nosek's deputy in his absence), refused to speak for him. Next day the non-Communist ministers stated that they would not appear at Cabinet meetings until Nosek complied with orders and the plan to "Communize" the police was halted. On February 20, the crisis came to a head with the resignation of twelve non-Communist ministers (who are believed to have been advised to do so by President Benes with the promise that their resignations would not be accepted; meantime Benes would try to heal the breach with the Communists).

THE Communists rejected every effort of the sick and failing President, and presented their ultimatum. The ministers must be replaced by men of Gottwald's own choice; his press poured out accusations that the ministers had planned an armed putsch. Soon arms were indeed seen on the streets of Prague—in the hands of the Communist work-militia, mobilized to exert pressure. In vain did the twelve ministers insist that they had no desire to drive the Communists from office but only objected to their dictatorship. In vain did Benes announce that no other Premier than Gottwald, leader of the strongest party, would be acceptable to him. The Social-Democratic leader, Lausman, insisted on compromise. But the Communists had seen their chance to establish the dictatorship they intended and yet to put responsibility on their opponents. Gottwald and Nosek called for the notorious—and quite illegal and unconstitutional—"action committees" of Communists to go into action.

When Nosek sent his police to invade the Social Democrats' (and other parties') headquarters, Lausman surrendered, while armed Communist bands tramped the streets—those toughs whom Mr. Platts-Mills, a Labor member of Parliament, was so curiously unable to see during the twenty-four hours he spent in Prague, though his fellow-countrymen, all of whom he so studiously avoided, could have shown them to him. The Communists never let up their pressure on the frail President, who was bullied as was President Hacha in Berlin in 1939. In vain did Benes publicly plead that he could not violate "my sincerely democratic creed." To the Communists he wrote on February 24: "Without betraying myself I cannot do other than insist on parliamentary government and democracy as the only basis for a decent and dignified way of life." By 4:30 PM next day, the Communists had got him down: he accepted the resignations and gave Gottwald *carte blanche*. "It has been very difficult for me," he apologized when Gottwald's men were sworn in three days later. "After long and grave reflection I decided that I could not persist in rejecting your demands. The crisis might have led on to the splitting of the nation and complete chaos. You want to conduct the state in a new way. I wish it may prove a happy way for all."

At once the Communist witch hunt rose to its zenith. Before the purges of the "action committees" there went down the flower of the democratic Republic—diplomats, statesmen, great writers and editors, the expert technicians of industry and commerce, rectors, professors, and students of the universities, scientists, famous socialists, famous liberals, the great colleagues of Benes and Thomas Masaryk—all who would not kiss the hands of the new dictators. It is not too much to say that the blow thus dealt to the country—with its currency already tottering, and the importation of essential raw mater-

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ials an almost insoluble problem—by depriving it of nearly all its capable guides, will cripple it economically for years to come.

The figure for those deprived of their means of livelihood overnight runs into hundreds of thousands. How many have been arrested the government will not reveal. As happened after Hitler, a suicide wave set in, headed by Jan Masaryk. Thousands of desperate fugitives tried to escape across the closely guarded frontiers. Many who were caught were lodged, to the delight of Nazi war criminals, in the Prague prisons in cells adjoining their own.

THERE is one feature of the Communist coup which everyone praises—its brilliant stage management. How far the producers have progressed beyond the crudities of the Nazis, the shameless electoral terrorism of the Communists which I saw in the Rumanian elections of 1946, the patent falsification of the electoral register and the lorry columns of Communist multiple voters whom I watched in Hungary last year! If the farce of elections is staged in Czechoslovakia there will be no opposition, no free press, and everything will run smoothly. Thanks to meticulous preparation, the coup was completed almost without bloodshed. Within two days of its enslavement, the population was going about its business, cowed and depressed—but unresisting.

Yet the Czechs are at heart as democratic as the British, the Swedes, the Austrians, or the Swiss. The betrayal of 1939 had destroyed faith in the power of the West to help. The preliminary capture of the trade unions; the network of fellow travelers established in key posts in the press—including foreign correspondents—the lessons learned from earlier Communist mistakes, the Russian alliance, and, above all, Communist control of the police through the Minister of the Interior, made victory easy for the Communists. *It is for those countries where democracy still survives to examine each of these factors and secure their elimination while there is yet time—if there is time.* Otherwise there is nothing to do but wait for the triumph of the man with the tommy-gun and the loudspeaker over those, no matter how great their majority, who have lost control of both.

WHERE will the Cominform strike next? My own guess would be Austria, although this would necessitate an invasion following some trumped-up incident on one of the Cominform's frontiers with this last bastion of democracy in Central Europe: alone, the Austrian Communists are powerless. But March 1948, like March 1939, seems to have awakened an unwilling world to a feeling that further appeasement or toleration of aggression can only whet the appetite and increase the strength of an aggressor who is deliberately preparing for war.

There are other possible objectives, of course. While watching the victory march of seven thousand armed Communists through Prague, I was accosted by a young man whose face seemed vaguely familiar. "You remember me?" he said. "We sat next to one another at a luncheon party given by the Ambassador of ——, a year or so back." I told him I remembered. "It's gone magnificently here," he said. "I'm off to the next battlefield tomorrow. I think we shall pull it off there, don't you—it should be fun."

"Greece?" I asked him. He stared at me, puzzled by something. "Oh no!" he said. "I did not know any of us expected that just yet. No, it's to Italy I'm going tomorrow."

"And after Italy?" I said—"Austria?"

"Not so long as the four power occupation remains. No, then we shall have a go at France. That may prove very tough—the opposition is firmly entrenched. But, of course, we are strong too."

Then, before I could get any more interesting information he looked at me questioningly and said: "You are the correspondent of the 'Daily Labourer,' aren't you?"

"A slight mistake," I told him. "He was on your other side at that luncheon—I'm *Daily Herald*."

"Yes, now I remember," he said calmly. "How silly of me." And raised his hat in polite goodbye.

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IS ITALY NEXT?

Anti-Communism Is Not Enough

HAL LEHRMAN

IN A SHOW of strength some months ago, thousands of Communist partisans paraded the streets of Milan dressed in American uniforms. The only non-GI item in the costume was the red kerchief each marcher wore jauntily around his neck. If the Cominform this spring or summer makes its bid for power in Italy by force, these same paraders will be the elite corps at the hard center of the putsch. It ought to surprise nobody if such an uprising—aimed, as usual, against "conspirators with the fascist-capitalist West" —rolls in GI jeeps and shoots its way to glory with GI guns.

This writer remembers looking down the barrel of an American-made tommy gun when a Red Army sergeant arrested him in Austria for stopping to eat lunch while traversing the Soviet zone with a Soviet pass. He remembers watching Hungarian Communists shepherd truckloads of sure voters to the Budapest polls in Dodge weapons carriers donated by the Soviet high command. He recalls how UNRRA textiles which were to become pants for Yugoslav peasants got made instead into Russian-style uniforms for the Yugoslav Army and how US gun caissons and assorted vehicles shipped as lend-lease to Moscow turned up in a ten-mile procession of the "new democratic Yugoslavia's" military power deploying past Marshal Tito's reviewing stand in Belgrade. The occasional raids by Italian police these days on Communist arms depots cannot possibly keep pace with the nightly deliveries of weapons all along the Adriatic coast by motor launch out of Yugoslavia. It is quite safe to predict that if and when the hour strikes for Italy, it will be struck partly with carbines, automatic pistols, and sub-machine guns marked "Made in America."

Such a bizarre denouement can hardly be attributed to American guile. One may even be pardoned for wishing, in the lamentable light of current Italian affairs, that our foreign policy were one-tenth as calculating and sinister as it is intermittently charged with being by Henry Wallace and his associates.

Nor is the delivery of weapons to our enemies with which to shoot down our friends the only evidence of American confusion in Italy. It is now clear that the whole Italian crisis has fed and grown fat on our blunders. If Washington had understood the Communist tactic better, we might not be fearfully waiting in this month of April upon elections which may smash our main dike against the sweep of Communism to the Atlantic. And if the outcome of the Italian vote should in itself

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ON APRIL 18, the Italian people are to vote in a fateful election which many believe will be the turning point in the struggle between West and East for Europe, and which may go far to determine the great question of peace or war. HAL LEHRMAN here analyzes the line-up of forces concentrated in Italy, and tries to offer some perspective on the possibilities that lie ahead. Mr. Lehrman, who wrote "Partition in Washington: An Inquiry" in our last issue—an article many readers regard as a major contribution to the objective understanding of the Palestine issue—is the author of the recent book *Russia's Europe*, an analysis of the pattern of Soviet expansion in the Balkans. Mr. Lehrman has written for the *New York Herald Tribune*, the *Nation*, *PM*, *Redbook*, and other American and British periodicals. He was born in New York City in 1911 and attended Cornell University.

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fall short of total disaster, and still leave us time to redeem Italy, we shall waste the opportunity unless we commit some of those "imperialist crimes" for which we are eternally being denounced by *Pravda* without ever collecting the reward. Otherwise, Italy will be lost—and our own security will not long survive her departure. For a Red Italy means even more than a gun in the back of democratic France, the further isolation of Trieste and Austria, and the beginning of panic throughout Western Europe. With Stalin astride the central Mediterranean, Greece remains tenable only by a miracle, and remote Turkey rots like fruit on a severed vine.

How is it that Communism has been able to burrow so deeply into the soil of Italy, world center of Catholicism, arch-enemy of Marx and the Bolshevik society?

First of all, the credit must go to Mussolini. He was the best organizer that Communism in Italy ever had. He prepared the ground. His police state lopped off the potential democratic leaders, stifled the democratic instincts of the masses, reduced the Italian people to an apathy from which only demagoguery could stir them. His imperial Fascism hauled Italy into a war which dissipated her overseas outlets for excess population, drained her domestic resources, brought ruin, unemployment, and hunger. He thereby converted Italy into an ideal terrain for Communist maneuvers.

Further, Mussolini involuntarily but nonetheless effectively built up the Communist political machine. For a long time, the only underground operating against Fascism was a Communist underground. It had many years to perfect its structure and discipline. Most of the early victims of the Fascist tribunals were Communists. Those who were not were branded as such by Fascist propaganda anyway. The indiscriminate identification of Communism with all anti-Fascism then and later was false, but the confusion took root, and began to flower abundantly in Moscow's favor as soon as the hated Blackshirts' grip was loosened by defeat in the war.

Close second to Mussolini in unconscious aid to Communism after Italy's liberation, came Allied policy—or rather Allied lack of policy.

Moscow shipped in seasoned Italian Communists trained in Kremlin schools, Russian NKVD technicians, money, and newsprint. These were put to work organizing, recruiting, propagandizing, promising all things to all men. While they labored, we dozed. We talked and talked about democracy, but did virtually nothing to make democracy possible. Instead of the flood of materials we could have poured in, we sent the Italian democrats only a trickle of the propaganda tools they needed to win friends and votes. We allowed Fascists to stay in power. We expected democracy somehow to flourish in a climate which had no experience of it, leaving the masses to grapple with the miseries of feudal agriculture, parasitic capitalism, the chasm between wages and prices, the co-existence of black markets and starvation. And, perhaps worst of all, we failed totally to penetrate the purposes and methods of the enemy. Instead of separating Communism from democracy, we insisted on an alliance with Communism and on escorting it to a seat of power, long after the military necessities of the war had ceased to justify such friendliness.

We could have studied the dismal histories of such fronts in prewar France and Spain, as well as innumerable minor examples of Communist "collaboration" with democratic parties. We might have known that the United Front was the classic device for enabling an organized Communist minority to manipulate the majority and then seize or destroy it.

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But we were in the era of good will, the honeymoon with the Soviets—and we insisted on duplicating on the national level in Italy the United Front we fondly thought we had achieved on the international level with Stalin and Molotov. It was Cordell Hull, not Vishinsky, who sounded the call in Moscow for a United Front government in liberated Rome. It was the Voice of America, not Radio Moscow, which did the Kremlin's work by trumpeting the virtues of "democratic coalition." It was official Washington, against the advice of Italian-American labor leaders, which literally forced the Communists on the parties of the democratic Left and moderate center. Italian liberals here who knew the facts of life about United Fronts and tried to get to Italy to sound the alarm, learned that there was suddenly no space available on any of the American transport planes flying the Italian route.

With Communist boss Palmiro Togliatti in the cabinet as Vice Premier, and a generous sprinkling of his aides in other important jobs, there began what might be called a drive for the "hispanization" of Italy. As in Spain, this consisted of obstructionism and sabotage inside the government to discredit the non-Communist ministers and saddle the minority on the backs of the majority.

Not only Togliatti but his chief lieutenant Luigi Longo, together with lesser satellites like Giuseppe di Vittorio and even the Socialist puppet, Pietro Nenni, had all actually served in Spain during the civil war. When the curtain rose in Rome, they were ready to play their roles brilliantly. Knowing that democracy was on trial, they did everything they could to make it look silly. They obtained, for instance, the amnesty of swarms of imprisoned Fascists, to the revulsion and bewilderment of the long-suffering anti-Fascist masses. They blocked essential reforms by piously demanding the impossible and rejecting anything less as evil. In short, they reduced the government to near impotence.

Last May Premier Alcide de Gasperi finally threw the Communists out, but by then most of the damage was done. Togliatti and his colleagues had gone a long way toward convincing a disillusioned electorate that democracy, advertised by the West as something new and wonderful, was nothing more than "disorganized Fascism"—and that they, the Communists, were the real hope of the future.

IN ADDITION to confusing Italian public opinion, the Communists had used their period of respectability to take and consolidate a hold on key sectors of that public opinion. First in line were the trade unions. Under Fascism, the labor syndicates had been mere bureaucratic facades. With liberation, all of them crumbled. Authentic local unions then began to spring up, and the various parties raced to capture these new groups before the fall of Rome. But the United Front fetish halted the competition. The Socialists, talked into it by Nenni, agreed to rebuild the pre-Fascist Confederation of Labor with the Communists. The OWI ballyhooed the compact on the air and certain agents of OSS went all out for it on the ground. Military Government officers, illiterate in native politics and wishing mainly to avoid a decision between "bunches of Italians," urged all local factions to "get together." Persuaded that it was the American wish, the centrist Christian Democrats, strongest party in the country, went along too. With the Confederation reborn, the Communists inexorably took charge, thanks to their unlimited funds and army of skilled organizers. Today they control eighty-five percent of Italian labor.

The same United Front tactic brought dividends of power over the *confederaterra* of farm workers. It also paid off in most of the cooperatives, which had been traditionally Socialist but were led by the

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renegade Nenni into the Communist fold. Many of these cooperatives, incidentally, did their chief trade in American food packages, medicines, and fertilizers. The national partisan organization, whose bonafide veterans had fought well against Mussolini and the Germans during the war, was taken over by the simple Communist device of handing a membership card to anybody who asked for one, whether he had been a partisan or not.

One of the richest prizes of all was the Union of Italian Women. This was completely fresh territory, female suffrage having arrived in Italy only after liberation. At the head of the Union was Rita Togliatti, the Communist chief's wife, and Giuliana Nenni, the fellow-traveling Socialist chief's daughter. This sisterly association did excellent work in child care, maternal welfare, health camps, and the like, on a national scale—all the time dispensing Communist dogma with other gratuities. An auxiliary function was to be agreeable to soldiers. In the confusion following the defeat and the Allied occupation, Italian troops were straggling home from every direction. Younger members of the Union transformed themselves into a kind of impromptu Red Cross, to greet the returning heroes with proper warmth and revive "morale."

SINCE their dismissal from the government last Summer, the Communists, along with the bulk of the Socialists and several splinter groups now incorporated in the so-called "Democratic Bloc," have been campaigning along two lines in preparing their next reach for power. On the action front they have employed the various organizations they dominate to stage strikes and mass demonstrations occasionally intermixed with planned riots and even miniature uprisings. Such disorders perform the double duty of making things harder for the government and increasing the economic difficulties which gain votes for Communism. An added benefit is the extra costs and problems created for the Marshall Plan in Italy. But strikes and "spontaneous" demonstrations are old devices, well worn from usage in countries farther to the East in Russia's Europe. It is on the propaganda front that Italy's Communists have displayed their originality.

In Italy the Communist propaganda line operates on the principle that people must be told exactly what they want to hear. It is therefore, at one and the same time, Marxist and imperialist, share-the-wealth and conservative, revolutionary and devoutly religious. It pledges help from America but calls down a pox on America. It favors Stalin and it favors Garibaldi. It soft-pedals the Italian Communists' attempted sellout of Trieste to Yugoslavia and whispers that if Italy votes satisfactorily the Russians may help her recover Africa. In Tuscany it courts the sharecroppers by promising a bigger percentage of the harvest; in Southern Italy it makes open alliances with the corrupt local political machines. Its agents tour the countryside with maps indicating the exact piece of land which each peasant will get when the Communist agrarian reform goes through—although the same piece of land is assigned several times over because there is not enough to go around. The Communists vilify Premier de Gasperi as "Chancellor" de Gasperi because he was a deputy to the Hapsburg Parliament from the Trentino—but they carry pictures of Stalin on tall poles. They wave clenched fists toward the West—but get up peace petitions thirty feet high purportedly signed with two million names. They denounce American aid as foul capitalist intervention—but assure the electorate that the rich Americans are boobs and will send food anyway even if Italy goes Red. Secretary Marshall can deny this daily, but Communist newspapers and orators will go on saying it.

The chief triumph of make-believe is

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the party's professions of faith toward the church. It will be remembered that Togliatti, to the delight of the clerical Christian Democrats and the mortification of the anti-clerical Social Democrats, used his moment of grace in office to write the Lateran Treaty into the new Italian Constitution. In the Communist rank and file are still some simple priests whose party connections date back to the underground days of the common fight against Il Duce. Togliatti knows that the Italian masses, though they may look to him for bread, look to the Pope for their spiritual sustenance. Accordingly, the Communists reply to Vatican fulminations by sweetly urging party members and friends to attend mass. When they collect ten thousand Communist women for a peace congress in Rome, they send them forth parading not with hammers and sickles but with doves.

As I write this, Italy's elections are set for April 18, less than three weeks away. It is not altogether unthinkable that between now and then the Communists may "postpone" the elections in favor of an armed rising. Such, in effect, was what happened in Czechoslovakia when the Communists there, convinced they would regret it if the voters were allowed into secret voting booths, resorted to police rule, action committees, and threat of civil war as a safer way to circumvent the Czech "reactionaries." But if the Italian Communists hold their fire and the elections do come off, the various possible results all seem to promise a troubled future for Italy anyway.

There is, first of all, the chance that the "Democratic Bloc" will win an absolute majority. This would be a disaster of major proportions. Italy would then turn speedily—and legally—into a complete Soviet satellite, and nothing could be done about it. Fortunately, the prospect of such a crushing defeat for democracy is slim enough to be negligible.

On the other hand it looks fairly certain—barring more strokes of good luck and genius like the brilliant Anglo-Franco-American demand for Trieste's return to Italy—that the Communists and their friends will dangerously increase their present strength in Parliament. They now have around thirty percent. The Vatican's intelligence service, which is rarely wrong in such matters, calculates that this may go up to beyond forty percent. If so, one of two things may happen. Depending on advice from the Vatican, which dominates centrist strategy, the Christian Democrats will either attempt to form a government without the Bloc or else take it into the cabinet in order to "control" it.

If the former tactic is adopted, it is hard to see how de Gasperi could obtain and keep a majority when some forty percent of Parliament would automatically oppose everything he did. It would be particularly difficult if the suspicion is confirmed that the Communists are behind a new extreme right-wing party, the Italian Social Movement (MIS), which is campaigning vigorously and may win a small but crucial number of seats in the next National Assembly. This MIS is an ultra-nationalist outfit but, curiously, it directs most of its saber-rattling against the *Western* powers. Another oddity is that most of its leaders are the *republichini* of Mussolini's brief North Italian Republic who were later amnestied by none other than Communist leader Togliatti in his capacity as Minister of Justice. If the MIS deputies vote against the Centrist coalition, de Gasperi may be hemmed in on both sides and unable to govern. And if de Gasperi should nevertheless manage to scrape together a workable majority, the Communists are not likely to remain passive. At the least, they are expected to follow the usual pattern of strikes and riots. They may even go farther—and call for civil war.

Should the centrists, however, decide

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on appeasement, that might also mean the beginning of the end. The Bloc, as the largest single unit in Parliament, would certainly demand key ministries like Interior, Justice, and War. If de Gasperi refused, the Communists could decline to enter the government, and then turn to violence. If de Gasperi accepted, or even if he surrendered less than all the positions demanded, the stage would be set for a repeat performance of the Czechoslovak legerdemain. It was by their "democratic" supervision of police, army, and press that the Prague Communists maneuvered into total power, and their Roman colleagues will try to be at least as agile.

This last alternative is so distasteful that the centrists will hardly stand by and spinelessly allow it to happen. Much more probably, the test will be a test of arms. For this the revolutionary Left has been long preparing.

The Communists are especially strong in the North, which may try to set itself up as a separate "people's republic" with Yugoslav assistance. The Bloc already holds virtually all the industrial cities of the North—Turin, Venice, Genoa, Bologna, and Florence among them—where the habits of local insurrection and autonomy are part of the city-state and communal tradition. The Bloc also controls the local Chambers of Labor, easily transformable into a kind of soviet. It has guns, even in the South, where the Cominform's secret committee for France and Italy has been accelerating clandestine arms deliveries against the day when the Western imperialists set up "war bases" in Sicily and the Italian boot. The Communists have their own army, more than seventy-five thousand strong, built around the wartime partisan units and drilled by Yugoslav instructors. And they have plenty of money—the ten billion lire taken from Mussolini's private till when Communist partisans nabbed the fleeing dictator, the steady flow of dues from nearly two and a half million party members, the fat tribute extorted from industrialists who fear strikes or from ex-Fascists who fear denunciation, and the untraceable but unlimited supply of currency smuggled in from Yugoslavia. Except for a contribution known to have been recently made by the Polish Socialists, Nenni's left-wing Socialists dip into the deep Communist treasury for practically all their funds. The Communists have lately taken a costly three-hundred-room office building as Rome headquarters, aptly located on the Via delle Botteghe Oscure—"The Street of the Dark Shops." They have fleets of cars and trucks, with an ocean of gasoline. Their newspapers are large and many. They can afford to support Bloc clubs in the remotest villages and hamlets. They never stint on free-flowing wine parties for the enlightenment of prospective voters. And they will have ample cash on hand to finance an Italian putsch of any magnitude.

THE de Gasperi government demonstrated last Autumn that it could handle Communist strikes and riots. But those disorders did not amount to a shooting civil war. Since then, the police have been strengthened but so have the Communist para-military forces. It is no longer certain that the legitimate government would be able to put down a large-scale insurrection. And it is most painfully clear that if Belgrade should recognize a northern "free democratic people's republic" under Togliatti and then dispatch Yugoslav troops openly or secretly across the border, the Italian army and police would be overwhelmed.

The one bulwark between Italy and such catastrophe is the United States. If American military supplies to Italy will suffice to maintain the legitimate government, then we can limit ourselves to sending just military supplies. But if these are not enough, we are bound by duty, right, and our own security to do more. By duty, because we

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exacted a peace treaty from Italy which will have left her too feeble to resist aggression. By right, because that treaty required the Italian government to obtain for all within its boundaries "the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms"—pleasures which will not endure for a moment in a Red Italy. And by our own security, because American inertia before the rape of Italy would only whet the Kremlin appetite for conquest over the shrinking remainder of free Europe.

That is why we must now consider the grim contingency that nothing less than American troops on her soil can save Italy. The sooner we consider this, the better. The mere announcement of such a decision might blow the crisis away. Inadequate and negative as the Truman Doctrine is, we already know that without its clear warning that any assailant would have to reckon with us, Greece would long since have been frontally attacked by the Soviet satellites. An equally vigorous stand by us in Italy would probably have the same healthy deterring effect. But if it does not, if American troops and ships and planes must be sent in whatever quantity we have available, if we must plunge into a limited war in Italy and risk the awful prospect of global war, then we must take that chance. Otherwise, we commit another Munich. We lose a forward bastion in the Mediterranean, increase our potential enemies, weaken ourselves, and encourage the Soviet Empire to wage global war on us at a time of its own choosing.

THERE is one possible outcome of the Italian elections we have not yet contemplated. Because of last-minute developments, it is conceivable that the Center and conservative Right will receive a strong anti-Communist vote. If the Communists get a real drubbing at the polls, it may delay their time-table of revolution. This would obviously be a blessing, for the moment. But would an electoral victory for the status quo give true aid and comfort to Italian democracy in the long run?

Alcide de Gasperi is an authentic, tolerably progressive democrat, but he has dubious connections. In France, de Gaulle served as a catalyst on the MRP, French equivalent of de Gasperi's Christian Democrats. De Gaulle drew to himself the reactionary elements of the MRP, leaving it purged, shaken, but genuinely liberal. In Italy, unhappily, the opposite trend prevailed. There the Communist menace caused reaction to ally itself with the Center for greater protection.

This does not mean that the Center became seriously tainted with Fascism. Renascent Fascism in Italy today is mainly a bugaboo conjured up by the Communists. The allegedly fascist Common Man Front (Uomo Qualunque), during its brief heyday, was primarily a party of complaint. Italians joined it out of revulsion against the futilities of the United Front government. The party's choicest expression was the *pernacchio*—roughly identical with the Bronx cheer. This was most frequently inspired by the spectacle of "proletarian leftist" cabinet ministers and officials, each with his sleek limousine, and each with his "Claretta" (little Clara) in imitation of Mussolini and his unlamented mistress, Clara Petacci. But a political party cannot thrive exclusively on the ideology of the Bronx cheer, and "fascism's" mass support soon drifted into the Christian Democratic coalition.

Nor is monarchism a serious present threat. The main trouble with the Christian Democrats is their clerical, feudalistic, and conservative bourgeois friends. Pope Pius of late has made gestures toward a liberalized economy, but few Italian workers will persuade themselves to regard the Vatican as energetically socialist. The tendency of the prelates, landed proprietors, and big industrialists who prop up the Christian Democrats is toward preservation of the status quo, with mini-

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mum concessions to the demands of history. Physical reconstruction has progressed, but economic reconstruction and social reforms to heal the ravages of war have lagged far behind. Farm and factory workers need and expect more substantial relief from their current misery. Like the American Communists who bank on a reactionary Republican White House in 1949 to bring chaos by 1952, the Communists of Italy would pocket the political profits if government resistance to basic reform after the elections drove the desperate proletariat toward the extreme Left for rescue.

For lasting solution of the Italian crisis, American policy had better avoid the chronic, fundamental error committed and compounded in Greece and Turkey. We cannot forever rely on conservatives as our best champions. We cannot always be merely *against* something, against Communism. From now on we ought also to be *for* something, for democracy.

In the present critical Italian juncture, of course, we shall temporarily have to forego the luxury of making choices. We must do our utmost for the government as a whole—by vote-getting stunts such as our gift of twenty-nine ships, by our anti-Soviet diplomatic offensive, and by full military aid if necessary. But, over the long term, intimate identification of the United States with the parties of the status quo would repel Italy's peasants and workers and imperil our democratic purposes. We need to do in Italy what we have not adequately done anywhere else. It is high time to begin. We need to build up and encourage the non-Communist Left—the democratic Socialist wing of the Third Force.

Unlike the party of Léon Blum in France, the Socialists of Italy failed to maintain their integrity against the totalitarian Left. For this, our foolish insistence on the United Front as the cure for Italy's maladies was largely to blame in the crucial first months after liberation. Only a minority faction of the Socialists, under Giuseppe Saragat, finally broke last year with the Communist-dominated Nenni wing. When the party split, Nenni kept the funds. Since then, the Saragat branch has been struggling for sheer survival. Latterly, it has been strengthened by deserters from Nenni. But because of lack of resources and party organization it is not expected to produce any brilliant totals when all the votes are in.

That is unfortunate for Italy, and for our cause in Italy. There was a time when the philosophical Saragat—seconded by intellectuals like Ignazio Silone, the novelist, and men of action like Ivan Matteo Lombardo—thought they might serve as a "bridge" between revolutionary Marxism and liberal capitalism. Since the events in Czechoslovakia revealed what happens to bridges between East and West, this notion has gone out of fashion. Right-wing Socialists today are still wary of unreconstructed capitalism. They still believe in a middle way. But they are vigorously in agreement with Saragat's current dictum that "nothing separates us from the Communists except an abyss."

Saragat is a Vice Premier in the present government. The head of that government is a prisoner of the conservatives. To rescue de Gasperi, to orient him toward a clean-cut liberal program, he must have a strong democratic Left instead of a conservative Right to lean on for his votes of confidence in Parliament. That is also the only way permanently to insure Italy against legitimate capture by Communism.

But the United States has been of little help in this direction. Our Rome Embassy has given some small assistance, but not enough to count. The State Department, even if it wanted to do better, undoubtedly still feels it must walk warily because of the lingering congressional phobia which sees both Attlee and Stalin as identical "Bolsheviks." Nor has American labor

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been notably effective. The ILGWU, which has many Italian-American workers in the needle trades, "loaned" Saragat 150 thousand dollars last July. The money disappeared quickly, so great was the need and so meager the fund. The AFL has been mailing an eloquent Italian-language bulletin to some six thousand union leaders in Italy. But, in general, American labor has busied itself with international conferences and inspection tours, leaving the propaganda war for democracy to the thin Voice of America.

What the right-wing Socialists and the small left-of-center groups allied with them should have received was the implements with which to construct a thriving political party: newsprint for newspapers, paint for wall slogans, cars and gasoline for organizers, and money for wine, fertilizer, and the other items of down-to-earth electioneering in Italy. It may be perfectly clear to us on this side of the Atlantic how the Italians should vote for the sake of righteousness and wisdom, but over in Italy it is the door-to-door party worker who gets out the vote. The liberal Socialists in the current campaign have been squeezed between the Vatican-built Christian Democratic machine and the well-oiled Communist steamroller.

It is too late for aid to reach the non-Communist Left in time to make a substantial difference in this month's vote tally. But, barring the outbreak of civil war, there is much that can be done later. The Marshall Plan will automatically take adherents away from the Nenni faction if it is applied intelligently and with speed. The alliance with the Communists was mainly by agreement among the top leaders, the rank and file accepting it as a convenient device against "reactionary capitalism." Nenni has fought the Marshall Plan, so its success will cost him many followers. The democratic Socialists will be particularly benefited if American help is directed to where it will do most good for Italy's farm and city proletariat: the building of roads, the supply of medicines, the delivery of materials to non-Communist cooperatives and of machinery to non-Communist collectives, with substantial quotas allocated to the impoverished South.

As for direct political help, the best investment American dollars could find for democracy's future in Italy would be in newsprint, equipment, and propaganda for the Third Force. Normally, the American government does not operate that way. In our peacetime democratic rectitude, for example, we have no "secret funds" to counter the bottomless treasury which a totalitarian regime can tap for "unvouchered" purposes. But these are abnormal times. We are engaged in a struggle in which our ordinarily proper aversion to "undercover" financial transactions abroad may cost us dear. American labor unions might be one channel for such operations. There are certainly others. All that is required is the will to explore them.

In Greece we have allowed a reactionary government to persecute democrats and drive them into the arms of the Communists. In Turkey we have made common cause with a semi-dictatorial regime. It could be argued that such dismal partnerships were imperative as temporary expedients in a crisis. In Russia's Europe we watched listlessly while the men of good will in the middle ground—the Petkovs, the Manius, the Nagys, the Mikolajczyks, the Masaryks—went down before the Communist bone crusher. It could be argued that this was the price of our honest effort to placate the Soviets and keep the peace. But in Italy we will let the men of good will be wasted and dispersed only at our peril—and to our shame.

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THE SITUATION OF THE JEW

Reflections on the Jewish Question—I

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

THE Jews have one friend, the democrat. But he is a feeble protector. No doubt he proclaims that all men have equal rights; no doubt he has founded the League for the Rights of Man; but his own declarations show the weakness of his position. In the 18th century, once and for all, he made his choice: the analytic spirit. He has no eyes for the concrete syntheses with which history confronts him. He recognizes neither Jew, nor Arab, nor Negro, nor bourgeois, nor worker, but only man—man always the same in all times and all places. He resolves all collectivities into individual elements. To him a physical body is a collection of molecules; a social body, a collection of individuals. And by individual he means the incarnation in a single example of the universal traits which make up human nature.

Thus the anti-Semite and the democrat tirelessly carry on their dialogue without ever understanding one another or realizing that they are not talking about the same things. If the anti-Semite reproaches the Jew for his avarice, the democrat will reply that he knows Jews who are not avaricious and Christians who are. But the anti-Semite is not moved. What he meant was that there is a "Jewish" avarice, an avarice determined by that synthetic whole, the Jewish *person*. He can agree without embarrassment that it is possible for certain Christians to be avaricious, for to him Christian avarice and Jewish avarice are not the same. To the democrat, on the contrary, avarice has a certain universal and invariable nature that can be added to the ensemble of the traits which make up an individual and still remain the same under all circumstances. There are not two ways of being avaricious: one is or one is not.

The democrat, like the scientist, fails to see the particular case; to him the individual is only an ensemble of universal traits. It follows that his defense of the Jew saves the latter as man and annihilates him as Jew. In contrast to the anti-Semite, the democrat is not afraid of himself; what he fears is the great collective forms in which he is in danger of being disintegrated. Thus he has chosen to throw in his lot with the analytic spirit because it does not see these synthetic realities. Taking this point of view, he fears the awakening of a "Jewish consciousness" in the Jew; that is, he fears

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JEAN-PAUL SARTRE's book *Réflexions sur la Question Juive,* published in Paris in 1946, has already come to be regarded by those who have read it in French as one of the most profound modern statements on the Jewish problem—a problem which Sartre sees as of central importance to modern culture and civilization. The first portion of this book was translated and published in this country under the title "Portrait of the Anti-Semite" (Partisan Review Series, No. 1). In it M. Sartre analyzed the psychology of the anti-Semite, seeking to make clear what unconscious drives lead the anti-Semite to project his own hostilities and frustrations upon that mythical figure which he labels The Jew. The book, following this, offers a close analysis of the situation of the Jew in Western culture, of the effect of that situation upon the lives and characters of those who must live in it, and of the responsibility of society in general to seek an adequate solution to the problem. This analysis, to which about three-quarters of the whole text of the book is devoted, will appear in COMMENTARY as a series of articles, of which this is the first. Jean-Paul Sartre, novelist, dramatist, and critic, is the leader of the existentialist movement in modern French literature, and has since the war gained an international reputation as the most distinguished and most productive representative of the new generation of French writers. Of his numerous books, those which have so far appeared in translation in this country include: *No Exit, The Flies, The Age of Reason,* and *The Reprieve,* all published in 1947. M. Sartre was born in Paris in 1905 and is the founder and editor of *Les Temps Modernes.* This article is translated from the French by George J. Becker.

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that the Jew will acquire a consciousness of the Jewish collectivity—just as he fears that a "class consciousness" may awaken in the worker. His defense is to persuade individuals that they exist in an isolated state. "There are no Jews," he says, "there is no Jewish question." This means that he wants to separate the Jew from his religion, from his family, from his ethnic community, in order to plunge him into the democratic crucible whence he will emerge naked and alone, an individual and solitary particle like all the other particles.

This is what, in the United States, is called the policy of assimilation; immigration laws have registered the failure of this policy and, on the whole, the failure of the democratic point of view. How could it be otherwise? For a Jew, conscious and proud of being Jewish, asserting his claim to be a member of the Jewish community without ignoring on that account the bonds which unite him to the national community, there may not be so much difference between the anti-Semite and the democrat. The former wishes to destroy him as a man and leave nothing in him but the Jew, the pariah, the untouchable; the latter wishes to destroy him as a Jew and leave nothing in him but the man, the abstract and universal subject of the rights of man and the rights of the citizen.

Thus there may be detected in the most liberal democrat a tinge of anti-Semitism; he is hostile to the Jew to the extent that the latter thinks of himself as a Jew. He expresses this hostility by a sort of indulgent and amused irony, as when he says of a Jewish friend whose Semitic origin is easily recognizable: "Just the same, he is *too* Jewish." Or when he declares: "The only thing I have against the Jews is their clannishness; if you let one in, he will bring ten more with him." During the Occupation the democrat was profoundly and sincerely indignant at the anti-Semitic persecutions, but he sighed from time to time: "The Jews will come back from exile with such insolence and hunger for vengeance that I am afraid of a new outburst of anti-Semitism." What he really feared was that the persecutions might have helped to give the Jew a more definite consciousness of himself.

The anti-Semite reproaches the Jew with *being* Jewish; the democrat reproaches him with wilfully *considering himself* a Jew. Between his enemy and his defender, the Jew is in a difficult situation: apparently he can do no more than choose the sauce with which he will be devoured. We must now ask ourselves the question: does the Jew exist? And if he exists, what is he? Is he first a Jew or first a man? Is the solution of the problem to be found in the extermination of all the Israelites or in their total assimilation? Or is it possible to find some other way of stating the problem and of resolving it?

WE ARE in agreement with the anti-Semite on one point: we do not believe in "human nature"; we cannot conceive of society as a sum of isolated molecules; we believe that it is necessary to consider biological, psychical, and social phenomena in a spirit of synthesis. But we take leave of the anti-Semite when it comes to applying this spirit of synthesis. We certainly do not know of any Jewish "principle," and we are not Manicheans. Neither do we admit that the "true" Frenchman benefits so readily from the experience or the traditions left him by his ancestors; we remain highly sceptical on the subject of psychological heredity, and we are willing to utilize ethnic concepts only in the areas where they have received experimental confirmation—in biology and pathology, for example.

For us, man is defined first of all as a being "in a situation." That means that he forms a synthetic whole with his situation—biological, economic, political, cultural, etc. He cannot be distinguished from his situation, for it forms him and decides his possibilities; but, inversely, it is he who gives it meaning by making his choices within it and by it. To be in a situation, as we see it, is *to choose oneself* in a situation [to choose to accept one's own identity beneath the accidents of status, rank, function, etc.—to choose to be oneself.—ED.], and men differ from one another in their situations and also in the choices they themselves make of themselves. What men have in common is not a "nature" but a condition, that is, an ensemble of limits and restrictions: the inevitability of death, the necessity of working for a living, of living in a world already inhabited by other men. Fundamentally this condition is nothing more than the basic

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human situation, or, if you prefer, the ensemble of abstract characteristics common to all situations. I agree therefore with the democrat that the Jew is a man like other men, but this tells me nothing in particular —except that he is free, that he is at the same time in bondage, that he is born, enjoys life, suffers, and dies, that he loves and hates, just as do all men. I can derive nothing more from these excessively general data. If I wish to know *who* the Jew is, I must first inquire into the situation surrounding him, since he is a being in a situation. I give warning that I shall limit my description to the Jews in France, for it is the problem of the French Jew that is *our* problem.

I shall not deny that there is a Jewish race. But we must understand each other at once. If by "race" is understood that indefinable complex into which are tossed pell-mell both somatic characteristics and intellectual and moral traits, I believe in it no more than I do in ouija boards. What, for lack of a better term, I shall call ethnic characteristics, are certain inherited physical conformations that one encounters more frequently among Jews than among non-Jews. Here it is still advisable to be prudent: perhaps we had better say Jewish *races*. We know that not all Semites are Jews, which complicates the problem. We also know that certain blond Jews of Russia are still further removed from the woolly-headed Jews of Algeria than from the "Aryans" of East Prussia. As a matter of fact, each country has its Jews and our picture of an Israelite hardly corresponds at all to our neighbors' picture.

When I lived in Berlin at the beginning of the Nazi regime, I had two French friends one of whom was a Jew and one of whom was not. The Jew was of a "marked Semitic type": he had a hooked nose, protruding ears, and thick lips. A Frenchman would have recognized him as a Jew without hesitation. But since he was blond, lean, and phlegmatic, the Germans were completely taken in. He occasionally amused himself by going out with SS men, who did not suspect his race. One of them said to him one day: "I can tell a Jew a hundred yards off." My other friend was a Corsican and a Catholic, the son and grandson of Catholics, but he had hair that was black and a bit curly, a Bourbon nose, a sallow complexion, and he was short and fat. The children in the street threw stones at him and called him "Jude." That was because he closely resembled a certain type of Eastern Jew who is most popular in the German stereotype.

However that may be, even admitting that all Jews have certain physical traits in common, it would be rash to conclude from that, unless by the vaguest of analogies, that they must also show the same traits of character. Or better: the physical stigmata which one can observe in the Semite are spatial, therefore juxtaposed and separable. I can on a moment's notice find any one of them in an "Aryan.'" Am I to conclude, then, that this "Aryan" has such and such a psychic quality which is ordinarily attributed to Jews? Evidently not. But in that case the whole theory crumbles. It presupposes that the Jew is an indivisible totality, whereas we have just shown him to be a mosaic in which each element is a pebble that we can take out and place in another pattern. Thus we can neither deduce the moral from the physical nor postulate a psycho-physiological parallelism. If I am told that I must consider the ensemble of somatic characteristics, I will reply: Either this ensemble is the *sum* of ethnic traits and that sum can in no way represent the spatial equivalent of a psychic *synthesis*—any more than an association of cerebral cells can correspond to a thought—or when we speak of the physical aspect of a Jew, we understand a syncretistic totality that yields to intuition. In this case, to be sure, there may be a *gestalt* in the sense in which Koehler understands the word, and it is to this that the anti-Semites allude when they pretend to "smell a Jew," "have a feel for a Jew," etc., etc. Only, it is impossible to perceive somatic elements apart from the psychic signification which is mingled with them.

Here is a Jew seated on his doorstep in the Rue des Rosiers. I recognize him immediately as a Jew: he has a black and curly beard, a slightly hooked nose, protruding ears, steel-rimmed glasses, a derby pulled down over his eyes, black clothes, quick and nervous gestures, and a smile of strange and dolorous goodness. How am I to disentangle the physical from the moral? His beard is black and curly; that is a somatic character-

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istic. But what strikes me above all is that he lets it grow; by that he expresses his attachment to the traditions of the Jewish community; he indicates that he has come from Poland, that he belongs to emigrants of the first generation. Is his son any less a Jew for being clean-shaven? Other traits, like the form of his nose and the position of his ears, are purely anatomical, while others, like the choice of clothing and glasses, expression and mimicry, are purely psychical and social. What is it then that reveals this man to me as an Israelite, if not this inseparable ensemble in which the psychical and the physical, the social, the religious, and the individual are closely mingled, if not this living synthesis that evidently could not be transmitted by heredity and which, at bottom, is identical with his complete personality? We must therefore envisage the hereditary and somatic characteristics of the Jew as one factor among others in his situation, not as a condition determining his nature.

Failing to determine the Jew by his race, shall we define him by his religion or by the existence of a strictly Israelite national community? Here the question becomes complicated. Certainly at a remote time in the past there was a religious and national community that was called Israel. But the history of that community is one of dissolution over a period of twenty-five centuries. First it lost its sovereignty; there was the Babylonian captivity, then the Persian domination, finally the Roman conquest. We must not see in this the effect of a curse—unless there are geographical curses. The situation of Palestine, crossroads for all the commercial routes of the ancient world, and crushed in between mighty empires, is sufficient to explain this slow loss of power. The religious bond was strengthened between the Jews of the dispersion and those who remained on their own soil; it took on the sense and value of a national bond. But this "transfer," it is to be suspected, indicated a spiritualization of collective ties, and spiritualization, after all, means enfeeblement. Shortly after this, moreover, the introduction of Christianity brought division; the appearance of this new religion caused a great crisis in the Israelite world, setting the Jewish emigrants against those remaining in Judea. In contrast to the "strong form" that Christianity was from the first, the Hebraic religion appeared immediately as a weak form, on the road to disintegration. It managed to maintain itself only by a complicated policy of concessions and obstinacy. It resisted the persecutions and the dispersion of the Jews in the medieval world; it much less effectively resisted the progress of enlightenment and the critical spirit.

The Jews who surround us today have only a ceremonial and polite contact with their religion. I once asked one of them why he had his son circumcised. He replied: "Because it pleased my mother, and because it's the right thing to do." "And why does your mother hold to it?" "Because of her friends and neighbors." I realize that these overly-rational explanations conceal a secret and deep-seated need to attach oneself to tradition and, in default of a national past, to give oneself roots in a past of rites and customs. But that is just the point: religion is here only a symbolic means. At least in Western Europe the Jewish religion has been unable to resist the attacks launched by rationalism and by the Christian spirit; atheistic Jews whom I have questioned admit that their dialogue on the existence of God is carried on against the Christian religion. The religion which they attack and of which they wish to rid themselves is Christianity; their atheism differs in no way from that of a Roger Martin du Gard, who says he has disengaged himself from the Catholic faith. Not for a moment are Jews atheistic against the Talmud; and priest, to all of them, means the vicar, not the rabbi.

THUS the facts of the problem appear as follows: a concrete historical community is basically *national* and *religious;* but the Jewish community, which once was both, has been deprived bit by bit of both these concrete characteristics. We may call it an abstract historical community. Its dispersion implies the breaking up of common traditions, and it was remarked above that its twenty centuries of dispersion and political impotence forbid its having a *historic past.* If it is true, as Hegel says, that a community is historical to the degree that it remembers its history, then the Jewish community is the least historical of all, for it keeps a memory of nothing but a long martyrdom, that is, of a long passivity.

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What is it, then, that serves to keep a semblance of unity in the Jewish community? To reply to this question, we must come back to the idea of *situation*. It is neither their past, their religion, nor their soil that unites the sons of Israel. If they have a common bond, if all of them deserve the name of Jew, it is because they have in common the situation of a Jew, that is, they live in a community which takes them for Jews.

In a word, the Jew is perfectly assimilable by modern nations, but he is to be defined as one whom these nations do not wish to assimilate. What weighed upon him originally was that he was the assassin of Christ.* Have we ever stopped to consider the intolerable situation of men condemned to live in a society that adores the God they have killed? Originally, the Jew was therefore a murderer or the son of a murderer—which in the eyes of a community with a pre-logical concept of responsibility amounts inevitably to the same thing—it was as such that he was taboo. It is evident that we cannot find the explanation for modern anti-Semitism here; but if the anti-Semite has chosen the Jew as the object of his hate, it is because of the religious horror that the latter has always inspired.

This horror has had a curious economic effect. If the medieval church tolerated the Jews when she could have assimilated them by force or massacred them, it was because they filled a vital economic function. Accursed, they followed a cursed but indispensable vocation; being unable to own land or serve in the army, they trafficked in money, which a Christian could not undertake without defiling himself. Thus the original curse was soon reinforced by an economic curse, and it is above all the latter that has persisted. Today we reproach the Jews for following unproductive activities, without taking into account the fact that their apparent autonomy within the nation comes from the fact that they were originally forced into these trades by being forbidden all others. Thus it is no exaggeration to say that it is the Christians who have *created* the Jew in putting an abrupt stop to his assimilation and in providing him, in spite of himself, with a function in which he has since prospered.

Here, too, there is really only a memory; differentiation of economic functions is such today that one cannot assign the Jew a very definite sphere of activity; at most it might be noticed that his long exclusion from certain trades has diverted him from them even when he has had the chance to engage in them. But modern society has seized on this memory and has made it the pretext and the base for its anti-Semitism. Thus, to know what the contemporary Jew is, we must ask the Christian conscience. And we must ask, not "What is a Jew?" but "*What have you made of the Jews?*"

THE Jew is one whom other men consider a Jew: that is the simple truth from which we must start. In this sense the democrat is right as against the anti-Semite, for it is the anti-Semite who *makes* the Jew. But it would be wrong to say that the distrust, the curiosity, the disguised hostility the Israelites find around them are no more than the intermittent demonstrations of a few hotheads. Primarily, as we have seen, anti-Semitism is the expression of a primitive society that, though secret and diffused, remains latent in the legal collectivity. We must not suppose, therefore, that a generous outburst of emotion, a few pretty words, a stroke of the pen will suffice to suppress it. That would be like imagining you could abolish war by denouncing its effects in a book.

The Jew no doubt sets a proper value on the sympathy shown him, but it cannot prevent his seeing anti-Semitism as a permanent structure of the community in which he lives. He knows, moreover, that the democrats and all those who defend him have a tendency to treat anti-Semitism rather leniently. First of all, we live in a republic, where all opinions are free. In addition, the myth of national unity still exerts such an influence over the French that they are ready for the greatest compromises in order to avoid internal conflict, especially in periods of international tension—which are, of course, precisely those when anti-Semitism is the most violent. Naive and full of

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* We must take note at once that it is a question here of a legend created by Christian propaganda during the dispersion. It is evident that the cross is a *Roman* instrument of torture and that Christ was executed *by the Romans* as a political agitator.

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good will, it is inevitably the democrat who makes all the concessions; the anti-Semite doesn't make any. He has the advantage of his anger. People say, "Don't irritate him." They speak softly in his presence.

In 1940, for example, many Frenchmen went over to the side of the Pétain government, which did not fail to preach unity—we know with what reservations. This government initiated anti-Semitic measures. The "Pétainists" did not protest. They felt extremely ill at ease, but what was to be done? If France could be saved at the cost of a few sacrifices, was it not better to close one's eyes? Certainly these people were not anti-Semites; they even spoke to the Jews whom they met with commiseration and politeness. But how could these Jews not realize that they were being sacrificed to the mirage of a united and patriarchal France?

Today* those Jews whom the Germans did not deport or murder are coming back to their homes. Many were among the first members of the Resistance; others had sons or cousins in Leclerc's army. Now all France rejoices and fraternizes in the streets; social conflict seems temporarily forgotten; the newspapers devote whole columns to stories of prisoners of war and deportees. Do we say anything about the Jews? Do we give a thought to those who died in the gas chambers at Lublin? Not a word. Not a line in the newspapers. That is because we must not irritate the anti-Semites; more than ever, we need unity. Well-meaning journalists will tell you: "In the interest of the Jews themselves, it would not do to talk too much about them just now." For four years French society has lived without them; it is just as well not to emphasize too vigorously the fact that they have reappeared.

Does anyone think that the Jews don't know what is happening, that they don't understand the reasons for this silence? Some of them approve, and say: "The less we are noticed, the better." Can a Frenchman, sure of himself, of his religion, of his race, possibly understand the state of mind that dictates such a statement? Is it not plain that to have arrived at this resigned wisdom, at this policy of self-effacement, the Jews must for years have been fully aware of hostility, ugly looks always watching, indifference always ready to turn into bitterness—this in their own country? Thus they have made a clandestine return, and their joy at being liberated is not part of the nation's joy. The following little anecdote will serve to show what they have suffered on this account. In my *Lettres Françaises* without thinking about it particularly, and simply for the sake of completeness, I wrote something or other about the sufferings of the prisoners of war, the deportees, the political prisoners, and the Jews. Several Jews thanked me in a most touching manner. How completely must they have felt themselves abandoned, to think of thanking an author for merely having written the word "Jew" in an article!

Thus the Jew is in the situation of a Jew because he lives in the midst of a society that takes him for a Jew. He has passionate enemies, and defenders lacking in passion. The democrat professes moderation; he blames or admonishes while synagogues are being set on fire. He is tolerant by profession; he is, indeed, snobbish about tolerance and even extends it to the enemies of democracy. Wasn't it the style among radicals of the left to consider Maurras a genius? How can the democrat fail to understand the anti-Semite! It is as if he were fascinated by all who plot his downfall. Perhaps at the bottom of his heart he yearns after the violence which he has denied himself.

In any case, the struggle is not equal. If the democrat were to put some warmth into pleading the cause of the Jew, he would have to be a Manichean too, and equate the Jew with the principle of the Good. But how could he do this? The democrat is not a fool. He makes himself the advocate of the Jew because he sees him as a member of humanity; since humanity has other members whom he must also defend, the democrat has much to do; he concerns himself with the Jew when he has time. But the anti-Semite has only one enemy, and he can think of him all the time. Thus it is he who calls the turn. Vigorously attacked, feebly defended, the Jew feels himself in danger in a society in which anti-Semitism is the continual temptation. This is what we must look at more closely.

The French Jews are for the most part members of the lower or upper middle class.

* Written in October 1944.

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In general, they follow vocations I shall call vocations of opinion, in the sense that success depends not on their skill in working with materials but in the opinion that other men have of them. Whether a man is a lawyer or a haberdasher, his clientele comes if he is pleasing. It follows that the vocations of which we are speaking are full of ceremonies; it is necessary to seduce, to captivate, and to retain confidence. Correctness of costume, apparent severity of conduct, honor, all are based on these ceremonies, on the thousand little dance steps it is necessary to take in order to attract a customer. Thus what counts above all else is reputation. A man *makes* himself a reputation, he lives on it; that means that basically he is completely dependent on other men, whereas the peasant has primarily to do with his land, the worker with his materials and tools.

The Jew thus finds himself in a paradoxical situation: it is perfectly all right for him to gain a reputation for honesty, just as others do and in the same ways, but this reputation is added to a primary reputation —that of being a Jew—which has been imposed on him at one stroke and from which he cannot free himself no matter what he may do. The Jewish workman in the mine, in the foundry, at the wheel of a truck, can forget that he is a Jew; the Jewish businessman cannot forget it. Let him multiply acts of disinterestedness and honesty, and perhaps he will be called a *good* Jew. But Jew he is and must remain.

At least when he is called honest or dishonest, he knows what it is about; he remembers the acts that justify these terms. When he is called Jew, it is quite otherwise; then it is a question not of a particular condition but of a certain tone expressed in all his actions. He has heard repeatedly that a Jew thinks like a Jew, sleeps, drinks, eats like a Jew, is honest or dishonest in a Jewish manner. And the Jew looks for this Jewishness in vain. Is any of us conscious of his style of behavior? Can any of us look at himself from the outside?

Yet this little word "Jew" appears in his life one fine day and will never leave again. Some children by the time they are six have already had fights with schoolmates who call them "Yids." Others may remain in ignorance for a long time. A young Jewish girl in a family I am acquainted with did not even know the meaning of the word Jew until she was fifteen. During the Occupation there was a Jewish doctor who lived shut up in his home at Fontainebleau and raised his children without saying a word to them of their origin. But however it comes about, some day they must learn the truth: sometimes from the smiles of those who surround them, sometimes from rumor or insult. The later the discovery, the more violent the shock. Suddenly they perceive that others know something about them that they don't know, that people apply to them an ugly and upsetting term that is not used in their own family. They feel themselves separated, cut off from the society of the normal children who run and play tranquilly and securely around them—those lucky children who have no *special name.* And they return home, they look at their father, they think: "Is he a Jew too?" How can they fail to keep the marks of this first revelation all their lives? There have been hundreds of descriptions of the disturbances which occur in a child when he suddenly discovers that his parents have sexual relations. But what must happen to the little Jew when he steals a glance at his parents and thinks: "They are Jews"?

At home, he is told that he should be proud of being a Jew. And he no longer knows what to believe; he is torn between humiliation, anguish, and pride. He feels that he is set apart, but he still does not understand what sets him apart; he is sure of only one thing: no matter what he does, he is and will remain a Jew.

WE HAVE been indignant, and rightly, over the obscene "yellow star" that the German government forced upon the Jews. What seemed intolerable about this was that it called attention to the Jew, that it obliged him to feel himself perpetually Jewish in the eyes of others. There were some who tried by all possible means to indicate their sympathy for the unfortunates so marked. But when very well-intentioned people undertook to raise their hats to Jews whom they encountered, the Jews themselves felt that these salutes were extremely painful. Under the looks of support and compassion, they felt themselves becoming *objects*: objects of commiseration, of pity,

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of what you will—but objects. They provided these virtuous liberals with an occasion for making a general gesture, for uttering a manifesto. They were only an occasion.

The liberal, when he met a Jew, was free, completely free to shake his hand or spit in his face; he could decide in accordance with his morality, with the way he had chosen to be; but the Jew was not free to be a Jew. Thus the strongest souls among the Jews preferred the gesture of hate to the gesture of charity, because hate is a passion and seems less free, whereas charity manifests itself from above to those below. In the end we came to understand all this so well that we turned our eyes away when we met a Jew wearing a star. We were ill at ease, embarrassed by our own glance, which, if it fell upon him, made him a Jew in spite of himself and in spite of ourselves. The supreme expression of sympathy and of friendship lay here in appearing to ignore, for whatever effort we made to reach to the *person,* it was always the *Jew* whom we encountered.

Yet the Nazi ordinances only carried to its extreme a situation to which we had formerly accommodated ourselves very well. Before the armistice, to be sure, the Jew did not wear a star. But his name, his face, his gestures, and a thousand other traits designated him as a Jew; walking in the streets, entering a café, a store, a drawing room, he knew himself *marked* as a Jew. If someone approached him with a manner a little too open and too friendly, he knew at once that he had become the object of a demonstration of tolerance, that his interlocutor had chosen him as a pretext for declaring to the world, and to himself: "Look at me, I have liberal ideas, I am not an anti-Semite, I know only individuals, not races."

But within himself, the Jew considers himself the same as others. He speaks the same language; he has the same class interests, the same national interests; he reads the newspapers that the others read, he votes as they do, he understands and shares their opinions. Yet they give him to understand that he does not belong, that he has a "Jewish way" of speaking, of reading, of voting. And if he asks for an explanation, they sketch a portrait in which he does not recognize himself. There can be no doubt of its being his portrait, since millions of people maintain that it is. What can he do? We shall see later on that the root of Jewish disquietude is the necessity imposed upon the Jew of subjecting himself to endless self-examination and finally of assuming a phantom personality, at once strange and familiar, that haunts him and which is nothing but himself—himself as others see him. You may say that this is the lot of all, that each of us has a character familiar to those close to us which we ourselves do not see. No doubt: this is the expression of our fundamental relation to the Other. But the Jew has a personality like the rest of us, and on top of that he is Jewish. It amounts in a sense to a doubling of the fundamental relationship with the Other. The Jew is over-determined.

WHAT, in his eyes, makes his situation even more incomprehensible is that he has the full enjoyment of his rights as a citizen, at least so long as the society in which he lives is in equilibrium. In periods of crisis and of persecution, he is a hundred times more unhappy, but at least he can revolt, and, by a dialectic analogous to that which Hegel describes in his *Master and Slave,* he can regain his liberty by opposing oppression and denying his accursed "Jewish nature" in armed resistance against those who wish to impose it on him.

But when all is calm, against whom is he to revolt? He accepts the society around him, he joins the game and he conforms to all the ceremonies, dancing with the others the dance of respectability. Besides, he is nobody's slave; he is a free citizen under a regime that allows free competition; he is forbidden no social dignity, no office of the state. He may be decorated with the ribbon of the Legion of Honor, he may become a great lawyer or a cabinet minister. But at the very moment when he reaches the summits of legal society, another society—amorphous, diffused, and omnipresent—appears before him as if in brief flashes of lightning and refuses to take him in. How sharply must he feel the vanity of honors and of fortune, when the greatest success will never gain him entrance into that society which considers itself the "real" one. As a cabinet minister, he will be a Jewish cabinet minister, at once an "Excellency" and an untouch-

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able. And yet he never encounters any particular resistance; people seem, rather, to be in flight before him; an impalpable chasm widens out, and, above all, an invisible chemistry devaluates all that he touches.

In a bourgeois society it is the constant movement of people, the collective currents, the styles, the customs, all these things, that in effect create *values*. The values of poems, of furniture, of houses, of landscapes derive in large part from the spontaneous condensations that fall on these objects like a light dew; they are strictly national and result from the normal functioning of a traditionalist and historical society. To be a Frenchman is not merely to have been born in France, to vote and pay taxes; it is above all to have the use and the sense of these values. And when a man shares in their creation, he is in some degree reassured about himself; he has a justification for existence through a sort of adhesion to the whole of society. To know how to appreciate a piece of Louis Seize furniture, the delicacy of a saying by Chamfort, a landscape of the Île de France, a painting by Claude Lorrain, is to affirm and to feel that one belongs to French society; it is to renew a tacit social contract with all the members of that society. At one stroke the vague contingency of our existence vanishes and gives way to the necessity of an existence by right. Every Frenchman who is moved by reading Villon or by looking at the Palace of Versailles becomes a public functionary and the subject of imprescriptible rights.

Now a Jew is a man who is refused access to these values on principle. No doubt the worker is in the same predicament, but his situation is different. He can disdainfully reject the values and the culture of the middle class; he can dream of substituting his own. The Jew, in theory, belongs to the very class of people who reject him; he shares their tastes and their way of life. He *touches* these values but he does not see them; they should be his and they are refused him. He is told that he is blind. Naturally that is false. Are we to believe that Bloch, Crémieux, Suarès, Schwob, Benda understand the great French masterpieces less well than a Christian grocer or a Christian policeman? Are we to believe that Max Jacob was less competent to handle our language than an "Aryan" municipal clerk? And Proust, a half-Jew, did he understand Racine only half-way? As between the "Aryan" Chuquet, celebrated for his bad style, and the Jew Léon Blum, which one has understood Stendhal the better?

But it is of no importance that this is an erroneous notion; the fact is that it is a group error. The Jew must decide for himself whether it is true or false; indeed he must prove it. And yet people will always reject the proof which he furnishes. He may go as far as he wants in understanding a work of art, a custom, a period, a style. What constitutes the *true* value of the object considered, a value accessible only to Frenchmen of the "real" France, is exactly that which is "beyond" and which cannot be expressed in words. In vain may he argue about his culture, his accomplishments; it is a Jewish culture; they are Jewish accomplishments. He is a Jew precisely in that he does not even suspect what ought to be understood. Thus an attempt is made to persuade him that the true sense of things must always escape him; there is formed around him an impalpable atmosphere, which is the *genuine* France, with its *genuine* values, its *genuine* tact, its *genuine* morality, and he has no part in it.

He can, indeed, acquire all the goods he wants, lands and castles if he has the wherewithal; but at the very moment when he becomes a legal proprietor, the property undergoes a subtle change in meaning and value. Only a Frenchman, the son of a Frenchman, son or grandson of a peasant, is capable of possessing it really. To own a hut in a village, it is not enough to have bought it with hard cash. One must know all the neighbors, their parents and grandparents, the surrounding farms, the beeches and oaks of the forest; one must know how to work, fish, hunt; one must have made notches in the trees in childhood and have found them enlarged in ripe old age. You may be sure that the Jew does not fulfill these conditions. For that matter, perhaps the Frenchman doesn't either, but he is granted a certain indulgence. There is a French way and a Jewish way of confusing oats and wheat.

Thus the Jew remains the stranger, the intruder, the unassimilated at the very heart of our society. Everything is accessible

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to him, and yet he possesses nothing; for, he is told, what one possesses is not to be bought. All that he touches, all that he acquires becomes devaluated in his hands; the goods of the earth, the true goods, are always those which he has not. He is well aware that he has contributed as much as another to forging the future of the society that rejects him. But if the future is to be his, at least he is refused the past. If he turns toward the past, he sees that his race has no part in it. Call the roll of the kings of France, their ministers, their great captains, the artists, the men of learning—none were Jews. And Jews did not bring about the French Revolution.

The reason for all this is simple. Until the 19th century the Jews, like women, were in a state of tutelage; thus their contribution to political and social life, like that of women, is of recent date. The names of Einstein, of Bergson, of Chagall, of Kafka are enough to show what they would have been able to bring to the world if they had been emancipated earlier. But that is of no importance; the fact is there. These are Frenchmen who have no part in the history of France. Their collective memory furnishes them only with obscure recollections of pogroms, of ghettos, of exoduses, of great monotonous sufferings, twenty centuries of repetition, not of evolution. The Jew is not yet *historical,* and yet he is the most ancient of peoples, or nearly so. That is what gives him the air of being perpetually aged and yet always young: he has wisdom and no history. "Pay no attention to that," you will say. "We have only to welcome him without reserve; our history will be his history, or at least his son's." But that is what we take care not to do. Thus he floats on, uncertain, uprooted.

Moreover, let him not turn back toward Israel to find a community and a past to compensate for those which are refused him. That Jewish community which is based neither on nation, land, religion—at least not in contemporary France—nor material interest, but only on an identity of situation, might indeed be a true *spiritual* bond of affection, of culture, and of mutual aid. But the Jew's enemies will immediately say that this bond is ethnic, and he himself, at a loss how to designate it, will perhaps use the word *race.* Then at one stroke he has justified the anti-Semite: "You see very well that there is a Jewish *race;* they recognize it themselves, and besides they crowd together everywhere." And, in fact, if the Jews want to draw a legitimate pride from this community, they must indeed end up by exalting racial qualities, since they cannot take pride in any collective work that is specifically Jewish, or in a civilization properly Jewish, or in a common mysticism.

Thus the anti-Semite wins on all counts. In a word, the Jew, an intruder into French society, is compelled to remain isolated. If he does not consent, he is insulted. But if he consents, he is no more readily assimilated on that account; he is tolerated—and always with a distrust that drives him on each occasion to "prove himself."

IN CASE of war or civil disturbance, the "true" Frenchman has no proofs to make; he simply fulfills his military or civil obligations. But it is not the same for the Jew. He may be sure that people are going to make a strict count of the number of Jews in the army. Thus he suddenly finds himself answerable for all his coreligionists. Even if he has passed the military age, he is going to feel the necessity of enlisting—whether he does anything about it or not—because people are pretending everywhere that Jews are slackers. A rumor not without foundation, some may say. Not at all. In an analysis of a Jewish complex made by Stekel, of which I will have more to say later, I read this passage: "The Christians said"—it was an Austrian Jewess speaking—"that the Jews always try to get out from under as much as they can. Then my husband wanted to volunteer." Now this referred to the beginning of the war of 1914, and Austria had had no war since that of 1866, which was carried on with a professional army. This slander upon the Austrian Jews, which has been spread in France also, is simply the spontaneous fruit of distrust of the Jew.

In 1938, at the time of the international crisis that was resolved at Munich, the French government called up only certain categories of the reserve. The majority of the men able to bear arms were not yet mobilized. Already, however, stones were being thrown through the store windows of one of my friends, a Jewish merchant at

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Belleville, on the grounds that he was a slacker. Thus the Jew, if he is to be left in peace, should be mobilized ahead of other people; in case of famine, he should be hungrier than others; if a general disaster strikes the country, he should be the one whom it hits hardest.

This perpetual obligation to prove that he is French puts the Jew in a situation of guilt. If on every occasion he does not do more than everybody else, much more than anybody else, he is guilty, he is a dirty Jew —and one might say, parodying the words of Beaumarchais: To judge by the qualities we demand of a Jew if he is to be assimilated as a "true" Frenchman, how many Frenchmen would be found worthy of being Jews in their own country?

SINCE the Jew is dependent upon opinion for his profession, his rights, and his life, his situation is completely unstable. Legally not open to attack, he is at the mercy of the whims and passions of the "real" society. He carefully watches the progress of anti-Semitism; he tries to foresee crises and gauge trends in the same way that the peasant keeps watch on the weather and predicts storms. He ceaselessly calculates the effects that external events will have on his own position. He may accumulate legal guarantees, riches, honors; he is only the more vulnerable on that account, and he knows it. Thus it seems to him at one and the same time that his efforts are always crowned with success—for he knows the astonishing successes of his race—and that a curse has made them empty, for he will never acquire the security enjoyed by the most humble Christian.

This is perhaps one of the meanings of *The Trial* by the Jew, Kafka. Like the hero of that novel, the Jew is engaged in a long trial. He does not know his judges, scarcely even his lawyers; he does not know what he is charged with, yet he knows that he is considered guilty; judgment is continually put off—for a week, two weeks—he takes advantage of these delays to improve his position in a thousand ways, but every precaution taken at random pushes him a little deeper into guilt. His external situation may appear brilliant, but the interminable trial invisibly wastes him away, and it happens sometimes, as in the novel, that men seize him, carry him off on the pretense that he has lost his case, and murder him in some vague area of the suburbs.

The anti-Semites are right in saying that the Jew eats, drinks, reads, sleeps, and dies like a Jew. What else could he do? They have subtly poisoned his food, his sleep, and even his death. How else could it be for him, subjected every moment to this poisoning? As soon as he steps outside, as soon as he encounters others, in the street or in public places, as soon as he feels upon him the look of those whom a Jewish newspaper calls "Them"—a look that is a mixture of fear, disdain, reproach, and brotherly love —he must decide: does he or does he not consent to be the person whose role they make him play? And if he consents, to what extent? If he refuses, will he refuse all kinship with other Israelites, or only an ethnic relationship?

Whatever he does, his course has been set for him. He can choose to be courageous or cowardly, sad or gay; he can choose to kill Christians or to love them; but he cannot choose not to be a Jew. Or, rather, if he does so choose, if he declares that Jews do not exist, if he denies with violence and desperation the Jewish character in himself, it is precisely in this that he is a Jew. I who am not a Jew, I have nothing to deny, nothing to prove; but if the Jew has decided that his race does not exist, it is up to him to prove it. To be a Jew is to be thrown into —to be *abandoned to*—the situation of a Jew; and at the same time it is to be responsible in and through one's own person for the destiny and the very nature of the Jewish people. For, whatever the Jew says or does, and whether he have a clear or vague conception of his responsibilities, it is as if all his acts were subject to a Kantian imperative, as if he had to ask himself before each act: "If all Jews acted as I am going to do, what would happen to Jewish life?" And to the questions he asks himself (what would happen if all the Jews were Zionists, or if, on the contrary, they were all converted to Christianity? If all Jews denied they were Jews? etc.), he must make reply, alone and unaided, by choosing himself.

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HOW DEAL WITH ARAB NATIONALISM?

Enforcement of Partition Will Strengthen Progressive Forces

JOHN MARLOWE

CAIRO

IN THE desperate search for a solution of the Palestine problem, one of the most vital elements of that problem remains an unknown factor—Arab nationalism. Public opinion in the West tends to swing between two extremes: either Arab nationalism is pictured as a weak, artificially stimulated bogy concealing Arab fragmentation and disunity, or it is a monolithic Moslem front, united in implacable hostility to every Jewish aspiration.

But what are the facts and how do these affect the establishment of a workable Palestine policy?

HISTORICALLY, Arab nationalism springs from two main sources, both of which developed simultaneously but independently under the Ottoman Empire during the 19th century. One source, among the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula, was the Islamic puritanism preached by Mohammed ibn Abdul Wahab and sponsored by the Nejdi ruling family of Ibn Saud during the second half of the 18th century. This Islamic revival, in a region which had largely reverted to paganism, was the motive power behind the slow movement towards the political unification of the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula that has been accomplished, during recent years and after many vicissitudes, by the house of Ibn Saud. The other source of contemporary Arab nationalism was in the more populous and advanced sectors of Arab life; this was the liberal European nationalism that was one of the by-products of the French Revolution, and which was introduced into Syria, together with other European ideas, during the opportunity afforded for outside contacts by Ibrahim Pasha's brief period of rule during the 1830's.

Nothing could have been more dissimilar than these two movements. One was orthodox and conservative; the other was secular and liberal. The one looked for inspiration to the Islamic faith, the other to the Paris boulevards. Both were consciously Arab, but the one regarded Arabism as a matter of tradition and blood, the other as a matter of language and common interest. It is not surprising that the two movements did not coalesce until the downfall of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War made them both part of a single international problem.

The First World War saw the collapse of two ancient empires, the Hapsburg and the Ottoman, and the consequent liberation of the diverse races that had been under their rule. The principal task confronting Allied statesmen at the end of the war was to allocate justly and peacefully the fragments left behind by these two dynasties.

The Asiatic settlement was dominated by the traditional Anglo-French rivalry in the Levant, by the discovery of oil deposits in Iraq, and by the importance of the Suez Canal to British imperial communications.

AT THE very hub of the intricate Palestine question is the rising Arab nationalism of the Near and Middle East. It is one of the newest of our current nationalisms and one of the most complex. It is also the nationalism which both Jew and non-Jew probably understand least—despite the fact that such an understanding would seem to be a prerequisite for intelligent action with regard to Palestine. JOHN MARLOWE is the pen name of a British writer who has had the opportunity to study the subject at first hand over a period of many years, and who here attempts to answer some of the host of inevitable questions about Arab nationalism that perplex the observer. He is the author of *Rebellion in Palestine* (London, 1946).

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The Arabian Peninsula, which was of only secondary strategic and economic importance, received its freedom, while the much more culturally advanced Fertile Crescent, consisting of Syria and Mesopotamia, was parceled out between Great Britain and France. Thus the political settlement imposed by the British and French attempted to keep separate the two converging streams of Arab nationalism—which had, indeed, come together for a fleeting moment in the short-lived Syrian kingdom set up by Faisal after the capture of Damascus by the Arab armies guided by T. E. Lawrence.

During the twenty-year period between the two wars, therefore, desert and town pursued their political destinies separately. In the Arabian Peninsula, Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud achieved his task of conquest and consolidation with such success that by 1939 he had become the most considerable figure in the Arab world and a force to be reckoned with in international affairs. But he was less interested in Arab nationalism or unity than in Saudi imperialism, the extension of his own power. It was in the fertile lands, in Syria, in Mesopotamia, and in Egypt, that the struggles for national independence gave Arab nationalism the shape which it has assumed today.

MOVEMENTS of national liberation in the lands of the "Fertile Crescent" for the most part closely followed the pattern of 19th-century European movements. Propelled by westernized intellectuals, they were compounded of idealism and violence, self-sacrifice and self-seeking, enlightenment and atavism. As success came, the magnates, the moneyed and the propertied men slowly shifted their weight over to the struggle against imperialist exploitation and imposed upon the new states, as they emerged, the mortmain of their traditional privileges and semi-feudal powers.

Slowly but surely Anglo-French domination was forced to relax its grip. In Egypt the Protectorate was abolished in 1922 and a constitutional monarchy proclaimed. Full independence followed in 1936. In Iraq, British military government came to an end in 1922 and Iraq became a constitutional monarchy in treaty relations with Great Britain. In 1932 a second treaty was signed which conferred complete independence upon Iraq and put an end to the British mandate. In Syria and the Lebanon progress was slower, and these two states, upon which France had conferred the status of constitutional republics, were still under French mandate in 1939. Transjordan, although still under British mandate in 1939, was self-governing in its internal affairs, subject to the advice of a British Resident. But in Palestine the Balfour Declaration, on which the policy laid down in the British mandate was based, inhibited any Arab development towards national independence or even self-government.

By 1936 the various independence movements had developed sufficiently to enable the nationalists to take a look over their own frontiers at their immediate neighbors. The shattered unity of the "Fertile Crescent" began to piece itself together again. Egypt, mindful of her new independence, began to look eastwards over the Suez Canal. Ibn Saud, secure in the lordship of the Arabian Peninsula, gazed speculatively in the direction of his Hashemite rivals to the north, sitting on their thrones in Bagdad and in Amman. It was inevitable that the concentrated gaze of the Arab world should become focused on Palestine, where the Arab population was beginning its three year revolt against the mandatory power.

The Palestine rebellion became to the Arab nationalists a rallying point for Arab national unity and a symbol of Arab national struggle. It was to bring out both the weakness and the strength of Arab nationalism. On the one hand it marked the beginning of the revival of that transient sense of Arab unity which had expired with the expulsion of Faisal from Damascus in 1920, and the bridging of the political gulf between the Arabian Peninsula and the "Fertile Crescent" which had been imposed by Anglo-French policy. On the other hand it was eventually to underline the economic

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backwardness, the political reaction, and the internal dissensions and jealousies of Arab nationalism.

The Second World War completed the process begun by the Palestine rebellion. By 1943, after Alamein had been fought and won, and after the tide of war had receded from the Near East, it was possible to discern a centripetal, unifying force in Arab affairs which, for the time being, transcended the centrifugal forces of dynastic rivalry, personal jealousy, and regional exclusiveness. This centripetal force crystallized in the Arab League, founded on the Alexandria Protocol of October 1944 and formally brought into existence in March 1945.

Arab nationalism, as it exists today, is a general term representing the lowest common denominator of the various policies pursued by the member-states of the Arab League. In the field of external politics, this common factor is large enough to amount to a coherent policy. In the field of economic and social affairs it is so small as to be almost invisible. The result is that the outside observer, accustomed to seeing something like a united Arab nationalist front at international conferences and the like, is often surprised at the comparative lack of common outlook in the domestic policies pursued by the various Arab states, and at the lack of a specifically Arab nationalist policy on social and economic matters.

In the "democratic" Arab states, the weakness of the executive, combined with the fear of Communism, has imposed the necessity of adopting a "liberal" attitude towards both the creation of social services and the organization of labor unions and syndicates. But the social services remain mostly on paper and the organization of labor is confined to industrial labor employed by large concerns in the principal cities. The agricultural magnates, who are the principal owners of wealth in the countries of the Near East, have so far been able to avoid paying the high taxes necessary for any comprehensive social services. In the cities, however, labor has become organized and has improved its position to some extent with the assistance of nationalist governments.

It would be a mistake to assume that the desirability of social reform is not appreciated by Arab nationalist leaders and by educated Arabs generally, at all events in the "democratic" states. Newspapers, and particularly opposition newspapers, are full of articles stressing the need for improved health services, better water supplies, free education, and so on. It is usually assumed that the principal obstacle to the attainment of these improvements lies in the incompetence of the government concerned. A few weeks ago the Cairo newspaper *al Ahram*, one of the few reputable daily newspapers in the Arab world, carried an impressive article, entitled "For Whom the Bell Tolls," which pointed out that Egypt's future national existence depends on a drastic improvement in administrative efficiency and social consciousness.

But would-be social reformers in the Near East are apt to will ends without willing the means. The root of the trouble is not administrative incompetence but the tax system. Social reform, which includes better, and therefore more expensive, administration, can only be implemented by a conscious policy that would distribute income through taxation. However, public opinion in the Near East (and in talking about public opinion it must be remembered that something like 75 per cent of the male and 90 per cent of the female population of the Arab countries are illiterate) is no more prepared for this than public opinion in Western Europe and the United States is ready for any limitation of national sovereignty.

In the "theocratic" states of Saudi Arabia and the Yemen (and to some extent Transjordan), where the executive is strong, and where contact with foreign ideas is slight, there has been no movement at all towards social reform (as understood in the West) or the organization of labor. The patriarchal outlook of Ibn Saud, who is the most powerful personality in the Arab League is probably the main reason why the League has

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not adopted any positive policy, even on paper, towards social reform. The emphasis has remained where it was originally placed, on Article Two of the Pact of the Arab League, which implicitly recognizes the impracticability, because of their widely differing social backgrounds, of any genuine cooperation among the Arab states, except in matters of foreign policy. It calls for "close cooperation of the member states with due regard to the structure of each of these states and the conditions prevailing therein."

It is interesting to compare Arab nationalism after the Second World War with Arab nationalism after the First World War. Twenty-eight years ago the various Arab nationalisms had in them something of the dynamism of youth. Arab nationalists, in Egypt, in Syria, and in Iraq—like nationalists elsewhere—really believed that the attainment of national independence would release forces that would sweep away their social and economic disabilities. "Self-determination" was the universal panacea. Today national independence has become more a defensive weapon against newer and more potent ideas than an offensive weapon against the old imperialisms, which in any case are as out of date as the nationalisms that oppose them. There is something unreal and "stagey" about it all. The limitations of national independence have been exposed and a new set of popular remedies is on the market. Progressive youth in the Arab countries, which twenty-five years ago would have been thinking and acting in terms of national independence, are now thinking and acting in terms of social revolution, and tend to regard the conventional nationalists in much the same way as the nationalists themselves once regarded the imperialists.

The prospect of social revolution is at least as alarming to the nationalists, who have long since grown out of the *sans-culotte* stage, as ever the prospect of nationalism was to the imperialists. The effects of this alarm seem finally to have disposed of any prospect that Arab nationalism, as now constituted, might serve as a vehicle for the social and economic reform of the Near East. Arab nationalism has become far too much identified with the social system as it is for the nationalist leaders to contemplate any drastic change. (This conservatism is due in part to the fact that Arab independence was achieved gradually, and not by sudden violence, so that the careerists had time to enrich themselves and the propertied men to accommodate themselves.) Consequently, Arab nationalism has been more concerned with diverting popular attention from social change than with any attempt to fit Arab policy as a whole to the realities of the international situation.

Moslem fanaticism has been excited in opposition to demands for social change, xenophobia has been encouraged to divert attention from oppression at home, imperialism has been denounced as being responsible for what are in effect the results of a semi-feudal social order. The struggle for Arab independence in Palestine, which does excite genuine popular feeling in many parts of the Arab world, has been put forward as the principal object of Arab policy and the principal *raison d'être* of Arab unity.

The existence of the unsolved Palestine problem perpetuates reaction throughout the Arab world. It diverts progressive thought and action into the stagnant channels of chauvinistic nationalism. It exacerbates the mindless Moslem fanaticism which is the sworn enemy of all social and economic progress. It insures the dominance of people of the type of Haj Amin el Husseini, ex-Mufti of Jerusalem, whose influence depends on the extent to which he can exploit the emotions of fear, greed, and hate. In short, the Palestine issue enables Arab nationalism to justify itself to the Arabs without offering constructive achievements.

The Palestine struggle also serves to paper over the cracks in the facade of Arab unity. It is a mistake to imagine that there is any more genuine unity among the governments of the Arab states than there is, for example, among the governments of South America.

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Implicit in all Arab politics is the dynastic rivalry between the Saudites and the Hashemites before World War I.

Husain al Hashemi, Sherif of Mecca and, subsequently, King of the Hejaz, was, by virtue of his overlordship of the holy places of Islam, the foremost prince in Arabia and Ibn Saud's principal rival for the mastery of the Peninsula. He allied himself with the British in the 1914-18 war, and his warriors played their part in the defeat of the Turks. After many vicissitudes his sons, Faisal and Abdullah, were elevated by the British to the thrones of Iraq and Transjordan. The house of Ibn Saud appeared to be hemmed in by the house of Hashem on all its landward frontiers, but Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, having disposed of his other near rival, Ibn Rashid of the Jebel Shammar, turned his attention to Husain, and by 1925 had made himself master of the Hijaz and the holy cities.

Since then there has been bitter enmity between the ruler of Saudi Arabia on the one hand and the rulers of Iraq and Transjordan on the other. There have been plots and counterplots, intrigues and counter-intrigues. Each party has its adherents in the neighboring Arab states, and the partition of the Arab world, established by Anglo-French imperialism, is perpetuated by dynastic rivalry.

There are many other sources of dissension in the Arab world. In Palestine the supporters of Abdullah, who want to see Palestine united with Transjordan, are at odds with the supporters of the ex-Mufti who want an independent Palestine under his own personal rule. The Christian Arab majority of the Lebanon pays lip-service to, but in reality fears and dislikes, the prospect of Moslem domination which is implicit in Arab unity. Communal strife in Iraq between the orthodox Sunnis and the heretic Shias is never far below the surface. Egypt has of recent years been more interested in the future of the Sudan than in the future of Palestine, and more concerned with North Africa than with Western Asia. Ibn Saud has made it quite clear that Saudi Arabia does not intend to embroil herself with the United States and Great Britain for the sake of Palestine.

After the lead which Ibn Saud has given, it is abundantly clear that no Arab state is prepared to forfeit a major source of revenue by making the continuance of oil concessions to Anglo-American interests dependent on political concessions to the Arabs over Palestine. On the other hand sufficient men, money, and arms will certainly be provided by the Arab states to enable guerrilla warfare to be maintained almost indefinitely in Palestine unless UN is prepared to implement partition with a sufficient degree of force and determination.

British policy towards Arab nationalism has been more or less consistent for the last twenty-eight years. After rebellion in Iraq and riots in Egypt had convinced Britain of the strength of nationalism in the Near East, successive British governments have pursued a policy of building up a bloc of independent Arab states, in treaty relations with Great Britain, that would (a) provide Great Britain with the facilities required, both in peace and in war, for the maintenance of her imperial communications; (b) secure for Great Britain and her allies unhindered access to the oil resources of the Near and the Middle East; and (c) constitute a barrier against Communist expansion, either military or ideological, into Africa and Southeast Asia. A certain lack of intellectual resilience on the part of the British representatives in the Arab world has prevented self-criticism, and the pursuance of her policy has led Great Britain, imperceptibly but inexorably, into becoming identified with those reactionary ruling cliques into which Arab nationalism has congealed.

In recent years British mandatory commitments in Palestine have proved a serious embarrassment to Great Britain in her relations with Arab nationalism. The same strategic reasons which led her to sponsor the Jewish national home after the First World War seemed insistently to demand the abandonment of that sponsorship after the Sec-

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ond World War. It is an indication both of the precariousness of Great Britain's relations with Arab nationalism, and of the importance Arab nationalism attaches to Palestine that the British government felt itself unable to "sell" partition to the Arab states. For there is little doubt that, with wholehearted British support, partition could have been implemented in such a way as to have discouraged serious Arab resistance on the one hand and to have compelled a Zionist spirit of cooperation towards the Arabs on the other hand.

The effect of the British attitude to partition has been both to encourage Arab resistance and to increase Zionist intransigeance. The apparent strength of Arab resistance, combined with the fact that American State Department policy in the Arab world is largely dependent on British advice and British experience, has in turn dissuaded the American government from putting its full weight behind implementation. Consequently it appears at the moment as if Arabs and Jews will be left to fight it out between themselves.

Any suggestion that the Zionists will be "pushed into the sea" may be discounted, together with any suggestion that the Zionists of themselves would be able to enforce the partition. What is certain is that the present Anglo-American attitude will confirm both Arab nationalism and Zionism in all their most reactionary, violent, and destructive tendencies.

COMMUNIST Russia is likely to be the only beneficiary of the present situation. In the Arab world there are developing all those conditions which have already made Eastern Europe such an easy prey to Soviet expansion. The vitality that enabled Arab nationalism to cast off the fetters of imperialism has been inherited by a new generation which, although not specifically Communist, tends to look to Moscow rather than to Cairo or Damascus. The social democracy of the West, which in other circumstances might have appealed to this new generation, is obscured for them by the identification of the West with the most reactionary elements in their own countries.

In Saudi Arabia the present patriarchal despotism may be able to inhibit "dangerous thoughts" and insure social stability for several more generations, provided there are no serious dynastic disturbances after the death of the present ruler. In the pseudo-democracies of the Fertile Crescent, with their racial minorities, their feudal magnates, and their inefficient administrations, the situation is far different. Neither Great Britain nor the United States can afford to let the governments of these states continue to use the Palestine issue as a refuge from constructive thought, a substitute for economic cooperation, and a vehicle for emotional excess.

The Palestine question has become a form of emotional and political self-indulgence for both Arabs and Zionists. The present situation is making nonsense of Anglo-American policy in the Near East, which can be defined, briefly, as the denial of the Near East to Communism both militarily and ideologically. It is high time that the British and the American governments began to weigh their Palestine policies on their merits instead of in terms of American party politics or of the personal prejudices of the British Foreign Secretary.

UNLESS the present Anglo-American attitude is altered, civil war in Palestine will become endemic, as it has become in Greece; the Arabs will continue to be debauched by a wild fanaticism designed to stimulate a sense of unity but which, by inhibiting social and economic development, will ultimately bring disintegration. The rivalries and dissensions of the Arab world will never be healed by a common hate or even by a common peril. The only way in which the states and peoples of the "Fertile Crescent" (for Egypt and Saudi Arabia are already showing signs of leaving the rest of the Arab states to their own devices) can be brought to a sense of reality is by a decisive implementation of partition followed by Anglo-American insistence on conciliatory

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behavior by the new Zionist state, the peaceful existence of which would depend on Anglo-American diplomatic support. If opposition to partition were shown to be sufficiently hopeless, Arab opinion would eventually accept the inevitable and, after the first shock had passed, begin to contemplate a state of affairs in which racial hatred and emotional excess had ceased to be political necessities.

It is not yet too late for second thoughts. If the Arab states are strong enough to liquidate the Zionists, Great Britain and the United States will sooner or later have to intervene to prevent this. If they are not strong enough to liquidate the Zionists, then they are not strong enough to withstand Anglo-American determination to enforce partition. British and American indecision is based on a complete misreading of Arab nationalism. The Arab reaction to partition was a sign, not of strength but of weakness, a sign not of awakening, but of an endeavor to keep from falling asleep. It is significant that the relative vehemence of the reactions of the various Arab states to partition has been in inverse proportion to the material resources, social stability, military strength, and administrative efficiency of the states concerned.

There are sufficient examples in modern history to show that the constructive contributions of nationalism end with the attainment of national independence. But the Arab leaders are trying to establish nationalism as the sole content of national policy. It is melancholy to consider the possibility that Arab nationalism may be travelling along the same road as has been travelled by Balkan nationalism—liberation, followed by turbulent and sterile independence, leading finally, through war, to Soviet domination. If the Arab states travel along this road, it is probable that the Zionist state will have to travel along it too. Will Palestine prove to be another Macedonia? The answer is, to a large extent, in the hands of Great Britain and the United States.

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ABOVE ALL, AVERT WAR!

Without Political Relations, Zionism Is Lost

ROBERT WELTSCH

THE only possible and sensible object of Jewish policy on Palestine at the present moment must be to avert war. Everything else is of secondary importance. One can no longer go on playing with blueprints and propaganda phrases as if the situation were normal. The very existence of the Yishuv—and possibly more—is in jeopardy. The war now seemingly imminent in Palestine will destroy all those human achievements that have been, justly, the pride of Zionism.

The Jews are confident of winning this war, convinced of their superiority in armaments and of the availability of outside help. But the Arabs feel the same confidence, and for the same reasons. It is said that the Jews in Palestine expect planeloads of arms on "D-day," May 15. The air is also open to the Arabs, and there should be no illusions about that. It is clear that war will cost both sides a heavy toll of blood, and that for obvious reasons the Jewish side is more vulnerable than the Arab. Even should the war be a victorious one for the Jews, it would be indescribably savage and, all military considerations aside, would leave behind a situation of moral disintegration.

The juncture is too serious to permit us to temporize with the facts. The burning question is whether it will be possible to avert the approaching disaster. It is this question that confronts American Jewry above all, which is now the only strong and independent force left in Jewish life. Many observers believe that American Jewry, with the best intentions in the world but blindfolded by a fundamental misconception and misinterpretation of the whole situation, has contributed much to the present impasse. Victimized for five years by propaganda, American Jews renounced their right and their duty to think independently. The events of the last three or four months may have done something to open their eyes; and now American Jewry must try its best to find a way out.

What I say here is not said in panic, nor should it be misunderstood as a "sign of weakness." The Jewish community in Palestine—to which I belong—will defend itself. It faces the fight with high spirit and determination. So far the Jews of Palestine have shown great organizational skill and an intense devotion to their cause—which is all the more remarkable when we remember that they have done everything on a voluntary basis. And world Jewry, whose responsibility for the present political situation is great, has a

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ROBERT WELTSCH is perhaps the most highly regarded independent journalist in Palestine, and a respected voice of the so-called "moderate" Zionist viewpoint. He has had the courage at many junctures in the course of the Zionist struggle to voice the unpopular view; and his recognized integrity and deep knowledge of the Palestine problem have always won him a hearing, even from those who have disagreed with his views. For almost twenty years (1919-38) he edited the *Juedische Rundschau*, official organ of the Zionist Organization in Germany. Since 1938, Dr. Weltsch has made his home in Palestine, where he has been editor of two weeklies and has written for *Ha-aretz*, *Palestine Post*, and other publications. He has been a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY, and may be remembered by our readers most particularly for his article 'The End of the Biltmore Road," in the February 1947 issue. Mr. Weltsch was born in 1891, in Prague.

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sacred obligation to help it; I do not think world Jewry will fail.

SOME people seem to believe that a war is indispensable to the creation of a nation: that war fuses the different sections of the people into a single national body. We should not forget, however, that we are faced by an enemy in a very similar psychological position. War may transform the Arab mind even more than the Jewish, and intensify immeasurably the growing nationalism of the Arabs. Anything that increases nationalism on either side will only impede a future settlement of differences. For such a settlement can be reached only if a common ideal of cooperation supplants nationalism, and the chief aim of both Jews and Arabs becomes the building of a new great Middle East on modern industrial lines, where different groups will be able to live their national lives in mutual tolerance and without nationalist ambitions.

Now is the hour of reckoning, of the *cheshbon ha-nefesh*, and we have not the right to go on repeating easy propaganda phrases for our own consumption. We are not yet totalitarian, and a member of the defeated minority at the Basel Conference in 1946 can still express views that differ from the present official party line. And, although we do not necessarily share the political views that have helped bring us to the present situation, we all do share the present military responsibility and the anxiety about the lives of our people.

Our urgent task is to act in terms of political reality. Reality, political or otherwise, cannot be replaced by abstract theory. A sovereign Jewish state as a solution of the Jewish problem may be theoretically unassailable, but this has little to do with the political realities of a world where political *relations* are all that matter. Without the proper political relations, simply to proclaim a state must prove ineffective. A less perfect solution, provided that it is approved and guaranteed by the great powers, is preferable to a theoretically perfect solution without a sufficient basis in the real world. And always we must keep our mind centrally on this fact: the main requisite for the survival of the Yishuv is security.

The decision of the United Nations Assembly to partition Palestine was hailed as the birth of the Jewish state and the dawn of redemption. A messianic mood filled the air; the final realization of Jewish dreams seemed to have arrived. Why has this mood been so quickly dissipated, why has it been so quickly replaced by fear for the very existence of the Yishuv?

The answer is not difficult. It was forgotten during Zionism's political struggles of the past five years—and to a large extent of the thirty years before—that political relations are more decisive than abstract political principles, solemn resolutions, and treaties.

In our contemporary world, divided as it is between two or three great powers, stability depends upon cooperation with at least one of them. One is not entirely free to choose here. Geographical proximity, as in the case of Czechoslovakia and Finland, may decide, or the relative military might of the great powers. This is a grim fact to admit, but it is the way the world has been left by the immense material and moral devastation of the war.

FOR ALL these reasons there was—and perhaps still is—only one political problem of paramount importance to Zionism: that is, its relations with Great Britain. However distasteful this is for us, Zionism cannot choose to align itself with any great power other than Great Britain, for neither the United States nor the Soviet Union is on the scene in Palestine. Great Britain was, and for the moment still is; whatever the future may bring, no other great power has yet appeared in Palestine.

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Relations with the Arab world create the second great problem—a problem that will be of still greater importance ultimately. But this problem has been neglected and its existence even denied by Zionists, and for this neglect and denial we have paid by the loss of irreplaceable time. For, after all, the Jewish-Arab conflict is the root of the present crisis, and its settlement is indeed the primary object of all our political and military strivings. Zionism demanded a political reshaping of Palestine to which the Arabs did not consent, and to which they could not be brought to consent willingly in this epoch of exaggerated nationalism. This fact has been ignored in the United States in an astonishing way.

If we accept the thesis that any nation, however small, has the right to lead an isolated existence of its own without having to be concerned with other people's needs, then the Arab position would be unassailable. But this view is impermissible, most of all to Zionists. But it also follows that Zionists, too, have to acknowledge the intricacies of rights and ways of life, and cannot assume that they alone may decree what can or shall be done in a region where different interests collide. The ideal aim of Zionist policy is a harmony of interests between the Jews and the other peoples in the region of which Palestine is a part. Naturally, this harmony cannot be easily achieved. But, even if we leave the Arabs aside for the moment, the political advantage of a coordination of interests with the decisive power on the spot—Britain—cannot be replaced by anything else, not even by resolutions adopted by the most imposing international body, when that body consists in large part of members who are entirely powerless as far as the subject under discussion is concerned. (I do not mean, of course, to deny the fundamental value of international agreements; but all of us by now understand that their value lies in the will and the power to enforce them.)

The real danger of the present situation is not the unsatisfactory wording of the resolution by the United Nations Assembly or Security Council, but the bitter reality of the outspoken hostility between Great Britain and Zionism, between—it has to be said—Great Britain and the Jews in general. This is a new development that has changed political alignments fundamentally. It is overlooked because too many people have estimated the situation only in terms of political controversy and verbal charges, utterly failing to anticipate that unceasing and accelerating hostility would lead to a situation of more or less open warfare. As long as British power maintained public security in Palestine, it did not occur to many Jews that their unrestrained attacks upon the British might one day have unpleasant, perhaps fatal, consequences for them and the Jewish cause.

THE Jews are hardly to be blamed for feeling deeply outraged and indignant at British policy during the past three years. The viciousness of this policy becomes only too apparent when we compare the irresponsible thoughtlessness of the Labor party's resolution on Zionism in 1944, promising unlimited immigration and a Jewish state, with events following that party's rise to power. Not even a humanitarian gesture was made toward the Jews after the close of the war, when all the horrors of Hitler's wholesale-extermination policy had been fully exposed.

But the question before the Jews was not whether they did or did not acquiesce in British policy. Of course, they did not. The question was how to act in view of the world situation and the alignment of political forces, keeping always in mind the means at the disposal of the Jews. The test of statesmanship for a nation arises when, confronted with a hostile policy on the part of another nation, it has to decide how to combat it and within what limits to keep its struggle. Before

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making its choice it must consider all the alternatives. What choice did the Jews have? This alone was the crucial point. It remains the crucial point. Nothing should be allowed to obscure it.

The fact is that there was no power but Great Britain with whom the Jews could have cooperated in Palestine or whose protection they could have sought. All we could do was try to extract as much help as possible from that power and find out how far it was prepared to meet our wishes. Inevitably, there would be heartbreaking disappointments, but one can always hope that political conditions will change, and sometimes there is no course left but to press one's case and wait for a favorable turn. The Jews could undertake a political crusade and use all the influence at their disposal, including that of world Jewry and of Zionist sympathizers all over the world; they could apply the weight of their moral claim, which was a *prima facie* case of martyrdom, and of their phenomenal constructive achievements in Palestine. Whatever the necessities of carrying on an intense struggle for Zionist aims, the most important consideration of all was to do nothing that would harm the Zionist cause in the eyes of the world. And it was perfectly clear that at some stage the necessity of cooperation with the British would again arise.

The only conceivable alternative policy for the Jewish Agency would have been to establish a reliable and effective connection with some other great power that would have been willing, for the sake of Zionism, to shoulder the necessary responsibilities in Palestine and in the Middle East. Many Jews were convinced that the Jewish Agency, especially its American branch, had grounds for complete confidence that the United States was prepared to play this role. Otherwise the policy that has led to the alienation of Britain would be inexplicable. But it should have been clear to any careful student of politics that the United States never seriously contemplated taking over the task of protecting Zionism in Palestine. Such being the situation, the vehement incitement to hostility toward the British among Jews appears a political folly with few precedents in history.

THIS is where the *terror* comes into the picture. Terror is not just "one" feature of Jewish life and Zionist policy among others. It is the overriding fact that has sealed the destiny of Jewish Palestine. Terror, and not Zionist conferences and congresses with all their inconclusive talk, has shaped Zionist policy. Terror has been the outstanding Jewish activity of late, hailed as heroism by too many Jews in the United States and elsewhere. Nothing else has influenced the Jewish attitude in Palestine to an equal degree. To be sure, the majority of the community condemned the state of affairs brought about by the terrorists, but later —seeing that the British did not strike back—became indifferent and finally condoned it, accepting it as necessary, as "the only language the British understood."

It is very difficult to absolve the Jewish community and its leadership of its share of responsibility for the anarchy that has been created in Palestine. Most people, including Jewish leaders, found all sorts of excuses for the terrorists, even though they would condemn some particular act. The usual way of expressing "condemnation" was to couple it with the explanation that the actual source of terrorism was British policy and that terrorism would disappear if that policy were changed. But objectively, this amounted to nothing less than approval of terrorism and encouragement of its use as a political weapon.

We must also realize that to some extent terrorism is a direct offspring of the official Zionist doctrine of the last six years. The Biltmore Program, with its de-

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mand for the immediate establishment of a Jewish state in the whole of Palestine, was generally interpreted as the proclamation of a struggle for independence analogous to the independence movements in India, Ireland, and elsewhere in the British Empire. The British were regarded as the invader who was to be expelled from the country. American Jews compared the situation to 1776, and the obvious implication was that the British should be driven out of Palestine. Palestinian Jewry and its youth were taught that this aim could be achieved by "activism" (*ma-avak*). Activism means in effect the use of political methods that do not incorporate the ways of democracy but instead adopt violence as a legitimate means.

And now months of murder, bombing, ambushing, sniping, bank robberies, blackmail, extortion, intimidation, and other outrages have created a state of chaos. Gradually, the Jews of Palestine lost their sense of proportion in respect to what was going on. Practically everybody found himself at the mercy of a secret Maffia, which had established an arbitrary rule over the community. The terrorists seized the key to the destiny of the community because everyone became involved in the consequences of their crimes. And once the whole community became involved, the British administration could not root out the terrorists without destroying the community. This fact should never be lost sight of.

If many Jews now accuse the British of not sufficiently protecting the Jews—which is true enough—we should not forget, on the other hand, that the British were unable, for their part, to protect their own subjects from the attacks of Jewish terrorists.

February and March of 1948 showed, unhappily, that violence was no monopoly of Jewish terrorists, and that it could be easily turned against Jews in Palestine.

The Jewish community of Palestine was too vulnerable not to have a deep interest —for the sternly practical reason of survival, if not for moral reasons also—in upholding what Aldous Huxley has called the "social convention of ordinary decency."

The only way to deal with acts of political terrorism is by collective punishment of the community in whose name the terrorists pretend to act, and which seems, or is forced, to protect and hide them. During the Arab uprising of 1936-39 the Jews of Palestine did not hesitate to urge the British administration to employ collective punishment and reprisals against the Arab community. The British civil and military authorities were very reluctant to do this—as the British have always been—but in the last year of the revolt they were finally forced to adopt this policy and did succeed in stamping out the revolt. Ten years later, confronted with Jewish terrorism, the British again hesitated. They went to the extent of making themselves almost ridiculous, at least in Jerusalem, by withdrawing into a few so-called "security zones," which were in reality British fortresses fenced in by barbed wire and nicknamed "Bevingrads."

Naturally, under such conditions, normal psychological relations between government and governed were hard to maintain. An almost unbridgeable gulf was created between the administration and the population. For many months the choice before the administration was either to take severe measures against the whole Jewish community and force it to repudiate terrorism, or to abdicate entirely and abandon the country to its fate. Sometimes the British seemed ready to take the former course; they used strong language and arrested people, but after a short time everything was undone and the situation was allowed to continue as before. The public drew the conclusion that the terrorists were free to do whatever they wished, and it came to seem

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almost an established habit for the authorities, who hardly ever caught anybody anyhow, not to interfere more than symbolically.

Since the British, under the circumstance, could not or did not desire to reestablish their authority over the Yishuv with all firmness, their only alternative was to abandon the situation altogether. When two British sergeants were kidnapped in August, 1947, the British administration warned the Jewish community to prevent the murder of these so-called hostages, saying bluntly that the consequences would be incalculable. The day after the bodies of the two victims were discovered it was decided in the British cabinet to get out of Palestine. Public opinion in England would no longer tolerate a continuation of the Mandate, and never were the British people as united as they were on this matter.

Without the terror, it might have been possible to regain public sympathy in Britain for the Jews—who, after all, had been treated very badly. But Jewish terrorism evoked indiscriminate abhorrence in all British hearts. To acknowledge defeat and abandon the situation is, of course, peculiar behavior on the part of an "imperialist" government, and there is no doubt that other governments would have reacted differently. But this is not the end of the story.

Many Jews forgot all too quickly the terrorist acts that had provoked the security and retaliatory measures of the British administration. It is undeniable that these measures, as well as some retaliatory acts by individual members of the British Army and police, intensified anti-British feeling in the Jewish community, and the terrorist slogan, "The British are our enemy," fell upon all too fertile ground. Psychologically, the victory of the terrorists was complete; they had brought the entire community into the same camp with themselves.

The British decision to evacuate Palestine was certainly not an easy one, and it is impossible to assume that the British are not bitter about it. Consciously or unconsciously, the British have finally come to the conclusion that they are what Jewish propaganda claims them to be—"the enemy." Their policy of "neutrality," in a country where law and order have been largely destroyed and in a situation for which they are still formally responsible, is untenable. But, however justified such criticism may be, it would be futile to criticize the British for not accepting their responsibility, as a member of the United Nations Assembly, to enforce its decisions under present conditions. Such criticisms will bring us no nearer to a solution of the Palestine problem as long as we do not understand and admit that the present state of war with the Arabs and of quasi-war with the British is in large part the result of Jewish policy during the last three years.

YEAR by year the Zionist organization allowed its relations with Britain to deteriorate irreparably. Although Zionist opposition to British policy and the British interpretation of the Balfour Declaration has been strong since the very beginning of the British administration in Palestine in 1918, it seemed self-evident, at least at that time, that Zionism could be realized only to the extent provided by the British framework. The Arabs never recognized the mandate and hated British rule as imperialism and oppression. The Jews on the other hand knew that it was this British rule that made possible, not only the work of colonization and economic expansion, but also the very existence of the Yishuv.

I do not wish to go into the question of whether or not British rule in Palestine can be described as imperialism. I am not opposed to imperialism under all circumstances; I think that under certain conditions it is preferable to chaos, and may

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at certain stages even benefit the subject population even though they be unaware of it. But the word "imperialism" is in very bad odor in America, and since the very beginning of the socialist movement it has been a commonplace of abuse—a commonplace now being put to good use by Communist propaganda.

But whatever we think of imperialism, once we accept it in connection with Palestine, it is clear that Zionism is its legitimate child. Without British mastery of the Middle East, Zionism could never have established itself in Palestine. The change from Turkish to British authority in Palestine offered the Jews a unique historical chance that enabled them to establish themselves under a Pax Britannica. Admittedly, dependence on alien rule also involves great disadvantages; your autonomy is not unlimited and you cannot do everything you might want to—but neither can you do so if you happen to be a small sovereign state of limited power. True, the Zionist community in Palestine had no direct access to international bodies, but on the other hand it had the valuable advantage of not having to concern itself with the defense of a country that, being a British dependency, no one would dare to attack. The mandatory administration was by no means an ideal state of affairs, but then we never do have ideal solutions in political life, and have always to choose lesser evils. To do otherwise is to surrender to wishful thinking. Jews today, however, have almost forgotten what extraordinary and unprecedented historical acts the Balfour Declaration and the mandate were.

The abominable White Paper of 1939 carries no small amount of the blame for this forgetfulness. Like all Zionists, I have never held any other view than that the rescinding of this document was the necessary and irrevocable aim of Zionism. Yet that aim could not be achieved simply by war against Britain or by the expulsion of the British. Nor was it necessary or inevitable that our struggle against the White Paper should have resulted in the state of affairs we now behold. If it did so, we share that responsibility because we embarked on an unsound political course —unsound because, in terms of our immediate needs, it did not place first things first. At a time when immigration for the DP's and the survival of the Yishuv were the necessities of the situation, we made the core of our struggle the fetish of absolute sovereignty.

From the very beginning of the Zionist movement many Jews believed that the Jewish state in Palestine required absolute sovereignty. It was one of the nationalist dogmas inherited from the 19th century that only a state could provide freedom and security, and that a people living within a greater political union—and therefore not fully "sovereign" —was exposed to permanent danger. I remember Vladimir Jabotinsky touring Europe in the 20's and preaching that only a Jewish state based on Jewish military might could assure a "free" and safe national life to the Jewish people. Some of us challenged his views, arguing that a national home as an autonomous part of a greater and mightier political and economic unity based on cooperation with the native population of Palestine and in close relations with her neighbors would be preferable to a miniature state and offer even greater security and freedom. But Jabotinsky refuted us by quoting the examples of such new independent states as Latvia and Esthonia. Thundering his faith in guns from the lecturer's platform, Jabotinsky seemed to give no thought to the possibility that if guns decided national existence, somebody else might have more and bigger guns, and that therefore a small sovereign state might be much more easily overrun than an empire. In any case, why sovereignty should be considered so great a protection in a world ruled by the law of the power jungle

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seems an enigma. Sometimes sovereignty, far from being a protection, is only a pretext for disturbing the peace.

There was a still more recent argument for Jewish "sovereignty" in Palestine. After Hitler's extermination of European Jewry it was generally claimed in Palestine that the Yishuv was saved from such a fate because it was the Jewish homeland where Jews felt free; and this, it was said, proved that the Galut was doomed. This is strange logic. The Yishuv was not saved because it was Eretz Israel but because it was geographically remote from the field of Hitler's operations—the same advantage that saved American, South African, British, and a great part of Soviet Jewry. If Rommel had broken through at El Alamein in July, 1942, nothing would have saved the Yishuv.

Nor would it have made any difference—perhaps it might even have worsened the situation—had Palestine been an isolated sovereign Jewish state at that time. What rescued Palestinian Jewry was not our semi-sovereign nationhood, but Montgomery's British Army.

This is no argument against the desirability of the Jewish state as an ultimate goal. It merely underlines the main thesis of this article: namely, that political relations are more important than the legal form of the Jewish homeland. Sovereignty without favorable political relations is less of a solution than favorable political relations without sovereignty. A Jewish state at war with the Arabs and with the British, and without any strong and reliable ally, hardly seems to offer a true realization of Zionist hopes.

THE British withdrawal from Palestine, together with their sabotage of action by the United Nations, has created a political vacuum which, in the absence of international authority, amounts to a worldwide scandal. This vacuum can easily become the scene of a ghastly tragedy, and British behavior would then be properly stigmatized as one of the most terrible examples of inhumanity in history. But the British can always point out that in their withdrawal from Palestine they only complied with frequently expressed Jewish demands. The Biltmore Program in 1942 told the British to go. The terrorist posters said so, too. The UNSCOP and the United Nations Assembly were unanimous on this point. And in the end the actions of Jewish terrorists, carried on with the encouragement of American Jewry, forced the British out of Palestine.

The world can blame the British for going, but how can the Zionists? True, what they had in mind was an orderly withdrawal and a transfer of authority to the Jews, but this was never anything but a naive expectation. The Jews did not realize that they could hardly decide for the British in just what way they would get out of Palestine. They forgot that hostility is a two-edged weapon. And, alas, to complain of injustice, however justified the complaint, does not help very much if there is no effective tribunal to whom you can apply. In the world of political reality one does better to take into account the facts as they are.

THEREFORE, I must humbly reiterate, political relations are more important than drawing up protests. The Jews need allies, and, at the very least, they need benevolent neutrality. Every measure must be taken, and quickly, for the effective defense of the Yishuv, but at the same time the political framework of Zionism needs to be reconsidered thoroughly.

Can American Jewry be of help in regaining some of the lost diplomatic ground? American Jews now carry the main burden of Palestine, which is utterly dependent on their financial and moral support. The destiny of the Jewish homeland is literally in their hands. We all know the tremendous contribution Amer-

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ican Jews have made to Jewish Palestine. But something more is demanded now. American Jews to a large extent share responsibility for the present political isolation of the Jews in Palestine. Large sections of Jewish opinion in the United States encourage and support the terrorists, and sometimes engage in hysterical anti-British propaganda that reaches even into fields of no concern to Jews as Jews—thus there was Jewish agitation against the American loan to Britain. This seems to me a grave blunder, and one that may in the long run hurt American Jewry itself.

It is possible that the disillusionment of recent months will arouse us to sober second thoughts. What will happen to the Jewish political state without political backing? Under present circumstances, it appears most unrealistic to expect an isolated Jewish state of, say, two million inhabitants, with an Arab minority of about forty per cent, to survive for any considerable length of time. The Jewish state can only survive as a link in the chain of some greater political system. The United Nations decision of November, 1947, envisaged an "economic union" of the Jewish and Arab states that were to be carved out of Palestine. This would be a first step; but in a period of political instability it is difficult to see how even a united or federated Palestine could retain its unrestricted sovereign independence. What useful purpose would be served by establishing on paper a small state that would become the prey of a conqueror at the first juncture? Such a state could only exist by grace of the rivalry of the greater powers.

The withdrawal of Britain from Palestine, with the subsequent creation there of a political vacuum, will be a revolutionary event of the first magnitude. Before the British came there had been no political entity called Palestine, and their departure cancels the development of thirty years. People in Britain regard this admission of failure after so many years of constructive effort on their part as a severe blow to their national pride, and they seem determined to avenge it. Although it may seem entirely frivolous and provocative to speak of an Anglo-Jewish war, as the Palestinian terrorists and others have done constantly during the last three years, this fantastic slogan is now within the realm of reality—certainly that is already the case on the level of emotion.

The Yishuv cannot wage war against both the Arabs and the British. If Britain, the only great power on the spot, really joins the camp of our open enemies, the prospect will be very dark for us.

American Jews must give full support to the Yishuv in its present struggle, since it cannot hold out without American aid, and besides they have the responsibility of making good the guarantees involved in their support and leadership of the course of Zionist policy in the last five years. This may even—and I think it should—involve bending their efforts to try to reestablish normal relations with Britain. This is also imperative in view of the general world situation.

It is not humiliating to acknowledge mistakes, especially since the mistakes we have made were based in part on a belief in the efficacy of the United Nations and in a stable postwar world. An error of judgment and a miscalculation of political forces have been made. More experienced people have made similar mistakes. It is much worse to persist in a mistake.

It lies with American Jewry to avert an Anglo-Jewish war under any guise. American Jewry alone can help bring Palestine back to the tradition of civilized conduct, which is the indispensable condition for Jewish existence and work. If war is not averted, we may as well stop all idyllic talk about making the desert bloom. The soil of Palestine will be drenched with blood, Jewish blood and Arab blood, and possibly the blood of

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others as well. The best generation of youth that the Jewish people have ever produced may have to be sacrificed. Before making final decisions, let us keep clearly in mind what is at stake.

THE action of the United States, in completely reversing its stand on partition [which took place after this article to this point was in type], only underlines the folly of the Zionists in relying on America against Britain. Warren R. Austin, the American delegate to the UN, has appealed for the immediate termination of bloodshed, but does not say how to achieve it without military measures. And the only troops available are still the British—and Britain declares she will withdraw them according to previous plan.

The United States government now finds itself in a position similar to that of the British Labor party: namely, of having promised more than it is willing to fulfill when confronted with reality. Possibly Gromyko will soon assume the role of opposition against Truman which Truman assumed against Attlee a year ago.

The new development only underscores the main thesis I have emphasized: that realistic political relations are a more weighty consideration than expressions of moral support. The Jews are rightly indignant at the behavior of the great powers, but indignation is not politics.

Again, I must reiterate, *Jewish policy must be guided by knowledge of the realities which must sooner or later prevail.*

The attempt to establish a *de facto* Jewish state after British withdrawal may be a necessary measure to avoid absolute chaos, but clearly it offers no final solution. For this attempt, too, depends on actual power, and the absence of power may mean the doom of Jewish outposts, including Jerusalem. Anyhow, it is an irrational move without ultimate recognition, which depends principally on America and Britain. Therefore, the vicious circle remains: final solution requires agreement from at least these two great powers, who—tormented by bad conscience after the "betrayal"—may be moved to find a peaceful settlement, permitting substantial immigration and establishing a political framework within which an autonomous or semi-autonomous Jewish community could exist.

In the present confused situation, it is clearly impossible to make long-range proposals; everything will depend upon negotiation after the restoration of peace and confidence. In the short view, however, it is urgently necessary to prevent further bloodshed, not by a declaration, but by strong and immediate military intervention, especially in Jerusalem, where it may soon be too late. The new American proposals, unless implemented, represent only a new escapism.

It is the duty of Jewish leadership to warn the great powers of their responsibility to avert catastrophe. But this involves openly exposing the full dangers and their participation in efforts to extinguish the flames. This, in turn, requires a rapprochement with the great powers —and thus brings us back to the basic thesis I have tried to present throughout this article.

The question of terrorism is unchanged: from the first, terrorism has meant disaster, and it means disaster today. The main need at this moment is to put an end to hostilities.

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BOOKS ABOUT EVERYDAY JEWS

The Jewish Part in the "Great American Inventory"

GEORGE J. BECKER

ONE of the most exciting aspects of writing in America since the First World War has been what may be called the Great Inventory. At last liberated from English stereotypes and the genteel tradition, and accepting the basic concept of the realistic movement that no subject is more dignified or inherently more worthy of literary treatment than another, American writers have been exploring American life and American personality with such exuberance and vitality that for the first time there has been brought into view the infinite variety and richness of American life.

The process is little more than begun. Whole groups have yet to exercise their literary franchise. It is only a few years ago that Pietro di Donato and Jo Pagano began to speak for those of Italian extraction. William Saroyan, in one delightful book, has paid homage to his Armenian background. If Louis Adamic is not known as the interpreter of the Yugoslavs, it is only because he has made himself interpreter for all those of immigrant background. After three centuries on American soil, the Negroes also have produced those who attest to the true nature of their being, in contradistinction to the insipid and time-worn stereotypes deriving from Harriet Beecher Stowe and Thomas Nelson Page. Some day there will be works giving an equally worthy account of the Mexicans, the Puerto Ricans, the Japanese, of those of Portuguese, and Finnish, and Greek extraction.

In this wonderful medley of racial strains, the Jewish voice is of special interest. Jews are at once among the most articulate and the most inarticulate of newcomers to these shores. Some have come bringing with them the full flower of European culture, capable of speaking in a cosmopolitan manner, rising above local interest and limitation. Others have come bringing only such remnants of culture as impoverishment and persecution have left them—or, for many, the very strength and fullness of the specifically Jewish tradition of Eastern Europe has stood in the way of new expression—and in this large group whole generations have passed without its members having been able to get far enough above their experience to describe it adequately. (There are, of course, some notable exceptions: Abraham Cahan's *The Rise of David Levinsky*, for example.) The former group will continue to write in what might well be called international idiom; as in Europe they produced a Kafka and a Proust, and on a lesser level a Werfel and a Zweig, so in this country they may produce writers of equal stature. But, because of their very absorption with the profound and timeless, they will have little to add to the Great Inventory.

It is the other, emergent level of Jew-

IN THE midst of the current flood of problem novels dealing with Jewish life in terms of frustration, hatred, and alienation, there have been a few books which seem to represent a different—and perhaps healthier—approach to Jewish experience in America. GEORGE J. BECKER, who in this article analyzes the qualities and values of this less "problematic" literary current, both in terms of the American scene in general and the Jews' own sense of themselves in it, is assistant professor of English at Swarthmore College, specializing in modern American and European literature. Professor Becker was born in Aberdeen, Washington, in 1908, and attended the University of Washington. He has published articles on literary subjects in various scholarly journals, and has contributed numerous book reviews and translations to COMMENTARY. He is at present working on a series of sketches to be called *American Novelists with a Grievance*.

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ish life that offers—in the terms I have set—humble but significant promise. From these Jews we may learn of Jewish experience in little towns and out-of-the-way places. Their medium may be biography and anecdote as well as fiction, they may write of broad social currents or of day-to-day perceptions. What they have to say is of interest both for what it tells of specifically Jewish experience and as one more manifestation of the infinite variety that has gone to make up the social history of this country and the myriad personalities of its citizens. And, I should add, it is of interest not only for Jews, but especially for those non-Jews like myself who seek to understand the complex and varying texture of American life. Such works need have no lasting importance in themselves, but they do have importance in helping to complete the record, in shaping attitudes, and in indicating a fruitful line to be followed in that continuing effort toward mutual understanding which is so essential a part of the democratic tradition.

Three recent books,* all written with love and nostalgia for a Jewish childhood in places as different as pre-earthquake San Francisco and Zanesville, Ohio, give evidence of what is potentially in store for us.

IT IS not surprising that Harriet Lane Levy, former associate of Gertrude Stein, should provide the best writing in her account of a San Francisco childhood in the late 19th century. What we see there is significant: a Jewish merchant group, living quietly to themselves without any sense of forced segregation, their chief enemies being the Bavarians, German Jews who considered themselves of more cultivated background. They attend a synagogue without any sense of perilously practicing an alien religious form; they employ for years an Irish cook-general who is quite competent—and not at all indignant—in coping with the intricate taboos of kosher cooking. When Josiah Royce laughs at young Harriet as she takes an examination for entrance to the University of California, he laughs at her as a funny and precocious little girl, and it never occurs to her to put any other construction upon it. Neither does it offend her that she does not move in the highest San Francisco society, with the Crockers and the Spreckels. Anti-Semitism did exist, to be sure. Young Harriet even engaged in a public debate on the subject, but her emotions—and she tells us she was eloquent—sprang from a generalized sense of justice, not from the experience of personal indignities.

Miss Levy thinks in retrospect that there was too much emphasis on money and money values, on making a rich marriage, on the awful specter of financial insecurity. But this has nothing to do with her condition as a Jew, for it is difficult to see in this O'Farrell Street interior values much different from those prevailing elsewhere in the Gilded Age. If, in later life, she preferred the Left Bank of Paris, so too did many other Americans equally in revolt against a materialistic scale of values that pressed on Jew and Gentile alike.

The other two books come from the other end of the socio-economic spectrum but tell also of integrated and significantly American lives. The father of William Manners was a rabbi. He was called "rev'r'nd" by the townspeople like anybody else who wore the cloth. Everybody in town recognized that he was a good man, and people of all faiths came to him for help. Everybody enjoyed his eccentricities and respected his right to those eccentricities. His children participated in the life of Zanesville on the same terms as any of their contemporaries. Whatever adjustments they had to make were personal: that is, they were required not by any generalized Jewish "problem" but by the unique interplay of personalities in a specific family relationship. The village, to be sure, has long since been discredited; but, for what it was worth, William Manners had much the same sort of up-bringing as Mark Twain had at an

* Harriet Lane Levy, *920 O'Farrell Street* (New York, Doubleday, 1947); William Manners, *Father and the Angels* (New York, E. P. Dutton, 1947); Charles Angoff, *When I Was a Boy in Boston* (New York, Beechhurst Press, 1947).

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earlier date in Hannibal, Missouri, or as Sinclair Lewis had, or Sherwood Anderson, or Theodore Dreiser, or any of us who grew up in a typical small American town.

And so it was with Charles Angoff, though he grew up in Boston after 1900, where the currents of prejudice might be thought to have begun to run high. Yet in the sketches of adolescent friendships and impressions which he gives us there is no self-consciousness, no shamefaced acknowledgment of the esoteric qualities of Alte Bobbe or Yetta or Harrele-mit-the-Pants. His family was often in straitened circumstances; he knew economic misery early. He also found that there were hands held out to help him, notably that of Jerry, a Catholic boy, who was his mentor on his first job. His memories are of people, of fugitive insights into the sorrows of existence brought by early death and capricious love. He gives no evidence of feeling himself set apart by a hostile community.

THIS, then, is a small part of the record, three lives out of millions lived by Jews in America—statistically slender proof that Jewish lives fit into the pattern like those of anybody else, but, because of its unpretentious validity, proof nonetheless. There can be no doubt that recent books on the subject of anti-Semitism, overt and implicit, are also necessary and often telling works. Yet they have one constant fault. They *assume* that the Jew is basically and sharply set apart from other men in the American scene without pausing to examine whether or not he is, or even *how* he is. They not so much attack the misconceptions that give rise to anti-Semitism as they exhibit plot and behavior and characters based on the assumption that it is inevitable and virulently dangerous.

Thereby, it seems to me, they succeed, to some extent at least, in verifying in a kind of back-handed way what it is their intention to combat. Decrying the stereotype of the Jew as "eternal alien," they yet serve to underscore, confirm, and *set* that stereotype as a permanent pattern in the American consciousness. Operating, in other words, in an area of abstraction, they permit even the most arrant offender to cry "Culpa non mea," to say in effect, "If that's the way things are, how can I be expected to act differently?"

Actually there seem to be two groups who must be convinced that Jews are individuals: on the one hand, the anti-Semites and those faint-hearted brethren who go along with them; on the other, some of the Jews themselves, who, though in quiet moments they know very well that they are individuals, seem under pressure from their adversaries to be subject to a kind of hysterical and hypnotized doubt of their own personalities. The essence of the argument of Jean-Paul Sartre, whose reflections on the Jewish question are currently appearing in COMMENTARY, is that it is the anti-Semite who *creates* the "Jew"—that is, who forces the person of Jewish background into the "inauthentic" position of correspondence with a wholly imaginary stereotype. Thus both groups are in need of seeing Jews as individuals, of looking at actual lives, not at caricatures or abstractions.

Such literature as is exemplified in the books I have described above serves first of all as a record of what has been. It may serve to demonstrate, to those who need the demonstration, that anti-Semitism is not the whole pattern of Jewish life in America and has not always existed in the intense, violent form in which it now exists—or, more accurately, is *imagined* to exist.

Perhaps an American's first reaction to Sartre's description of the Jewish situation is that things cannot possibly be as bad in this country as they are described to be in France. Indeed they are not, and it is possible that they never will be. But there are many Jews and some Gentiles who fear that things are that bad, or inevitably will be so; such people must be reassured as to what has been normal in this country.

Whether the evidence can have any effect on the anti-Semite is another question. He is not likely to read these books. Probably we can do no more with him than rob his

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claws of their talons, precisely as we must try to take from the Southern believer in "white supremacy" any effective ability to do harm. But there remains a great body of "fellow-travelers" who are affected simply by the noisy iteration of anti-Semitic statements. If there were a competent body of writing attesting with equal insistence and iteration to the variety and "normality" of Jewish experience, some of these might be brought back again to the more basic American tradition. Whichever stroke of the caricature it is that they allow to stand for the whole portrait of millions of individuals, they might be forced to recognize its inadequacy, its palpable inveracity, if they were confronted with enough individuals. It would do no harm for them to be reminded that Jews do engage in all sorts of vocations and have all kinds of experiences, even the experience of the "best people"—though that is *not* the point, since individuals are to be valued for what they retain of individuality, not for what they surrender to unimaginative conformity.

In short, so long as the Jew—or the Negro or the Pole—is an abstraction, he can be hated and he can be baited. Abstractions thrive on the lack of facts. Literature is one way to provide fact, emotionally charged fact, to make up for the limitation of experience. What we need is a multitude of facts, some white, some black, some gray. It is the wrong approach, I would say again, to try, as the movies are currently doing, to substitute one stereotype for another, to impose the "good Jew" in place of the "bad Jew." Let's just have Jews, lots of them, in every conceivable posture and situation, until it becomes just as tiresome to think of them as "Jews" as it is to label everyone we meet as Protestant or Catholic, as German or Italian, or as anything else which categorizes and conceals a fluid personality which is many different things at one time.

THERE is a more subtle point involved here. To cite Sartre again, he points out that in France, at least, there are those who assume a deep chasm between the *true* France and the legal France, between those who participate through a kind of mystical fellowship in things French and those who, though guaranteed equality by the laws, are disqualified from genuine participation on the grounds that they "don't understand," that they "don't feel" that which is the "essential" heritage of a Frenchman. Such a tendency is clearly in direct proportion to the frustration, economic and personal, of the self-styled *true* inheritor of the national being. In this country a similar assumption underlies the attitude of the Southern "poor white"; all he has left is his conviction that somehow he is the real, native American. This is his one title to respectability, and, tattered though it is, he uses it to cover both his spiritual and his physical nakedness.

On occasion, there are disturbing signs that there are those who would react to the Jews of this country in this way also, though such a tendency has nowhere reached the virulence of the outpourings of the *Action Française* in the decade before the war. One way to combat this tendency, where it does exist, would be to demonstrate both in daily action and in literary record that Jews always have participated, and continue in ever increasing numbers to participate, in the life of America, in whatever terms one can legitimately define that life.

Many Jews, too, lack knowledge of what Jewish experience is like outside their own narrow existences. (Wherever one looks, one finds that people generally have a painfully limited conception of the lives of others.) For such Jews, too, a record of the variety of Jewish experience might be helpful. If there are those who have been cowed into believing that they do not participate in the mystical "essence" of Americanism, such writing might bring proof that they, or at least their fellows, can so participate. Despairing of integration in American life, they may find that it is already complete in ten thousand places. Or, what is more important, they may discover that integration is not one thing but many things—that it is even being a Jew—and that the best thing one can do is to be oneself, not to be hustled

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into the unnatural attitudes to which others (and one's own image of the others) would constrain one.

It is no more strange to attend synagogue on Friday night than a Seventh Day Adventist church on Saturday or early mass on Sunday. Yom Kippur has an alien sound to some ears, but so does the Stations of the Cross to others. Ceremonial garments of Jewish family ritual are no more eccentric than the costume habits of Mormon elders. In other words, those things which to the Jew are peculiarly his own—though one would judge they are diminishing—would cease to set him apart as an alien if he contemplated the fact that other American stocks also have brought their own private cultural heritages, parts of which they have kept and parts surrendered to convenience or changed needs.

As he sets the transcript of his experience alongside that of other groups, the Jew can thus gain a double assurance—assurance of the process of assimilation, in so far as it is meaningful, and at the same time assertion of legitimate individuality. For how can one individuality be more suspect than another in a culture which is a pot-pourri of individualities, where a formal mold of behavior has never been more than local?

It is a delicate balance that is wanted. We must cherish and, where we can, preserve through artistry that which is our past; at the same time we must see it as contributory to a dynamic present. Nearly every American, whether of "old" or "new" stock, is busily becoming something other than what he was to begin with. His affirmation is therefore usually in the future; he has a tendency to deny the past as ignoble, or as simply irrelevant, a temporary passageway to a state actually never to be achieved. When he pauses to observe his own origins, it is with a sense of wonder because he is already so completely somewhere else. When he ponders those origins, he finds in them a mirrored magnification of the overwhelming variety which he already sees around him, a verification that this is the "normal" situation in this country.

Because of this fluidity of forms, this uncertainty of destination, he who denies any part of this social body is denying part of his own body. The only tenable attitude, so long as we all engage in the same social enterprise, is that we are all Americans—without anybody's feeling a need to define exactly what an American is. If we can conceive of America as infinite variety striving toward an eventual, though many-faceted, unity, then we can take pleasure in the Great Inventory, can indeed use that inventory to demonstrate our right to belong and to strengthen our conviction that we do belong.

Perhaps participation really is a mystical thing, but it is first of all a physical thing, and it is asserted by the very act of participating. It can be undermined only by abstention. Literature is a record and an affirmation of that fact. There can be no surfeit if each man sets down what he feels and sees. Such records honestly made are a valid and permanent enrichment of the stock of American experience. They have ceased to be alien or parochial by their reference to the larger social framework. And that is as it should be.

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A LETTER

KALMAN HEISLER

My countryman, Sidney Hauser,
1920 Harrison Avenue,
Bronx 55, N. Y.
Writes me a letter:

A postal came from Komarno,
From our home;
Censored by the Soviets.
The writing is dated the 27th,
September 1945.

But the writer, a former neighbor,
A peasant, an old gentleman;
One of the better ones—
Writes openly and to the point.

On the 24th of October, 1942
One lone machine gun slaughtered
430 Jewish males of Komarno;
And they are buried on Karachufka Hill.

In that grave (writes Sidney Hauser),
Lies my younger brother, Monish.
Again, in the month of November, 1942,
The women and children were taken
From their homes, saturated with naphtha
And put to fire.

Oh, Lord! This was a burning!
The women ran with hair unloosened,
The children flaming torches.
They wanted to run to the lake, to the water.
They wanted but fell—like scorched lambs.

And in that hell (writes Sidney Hauser)
My eldest sister, Miriam
And her two children were burned.
It is well my father and mother
Died before the slaughter.
A natural death,
Thank God, from spot typhus.

"Yes," writes the good peasant,
"To my great Christian shame
I must confess—the truth:
We, the neighbors, Ukraines, Poles,
Helped the Germans in their labor—
To kill, to slaughter all, all the Jews . . . ."

Even in the Jewish cemetery
Tombstones were uprooted—
They levelled the sacred ground.
Summertime they plow and plant,
The grass is green and smells sweet.
The swine of town come and go—
They feast and gorge themselves.

I don't want to forget
To thank—
The peasant, the old gentleman
Who sent a living greeting
From my dead town, Komarno.

Kalman Heisler, well-known Yiddish poet, does union publicity work with the Cloak Workers Joint Board. Mr. Heisler has published two volumes of poetry and a book of plays. He was born in Komarno, Galicia, in 1902, and came to America in 1921. This poem was translated by Jacob Sloan.

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TONIGHT WE EAT LEANING

A Story

HAMLEN HUNT

ROSE GREENHILL, who usually loved to give a party, felt doubt and apprehension as she looked at the long table, made up of several different tables united under a white damask cloth. The eight places set for dinner had required every mismatched plate and glass in the house, including some hastily bought that day at the Central Square dime store.

"The Silvers, and Dave Solomon," Rose thought, "the Jacobs', Dr. Petersen, and ourselves. That's eight."

At either end of the table was a platter with three matzos, on which rested egg, bone, and the bitter herbs known as parsley and celery. Rose had just been around the table putting at each place a small paper-covered hagadah such as come in letters from orphanages.

"Why did I make it a Seder?" she thought. "Here in Cambridge, it seems like putting on an act. I never felt worried like this about a party before."

By the time her husband came home from the hospital, still in his white interne's suit, Rose was feeding Peter. Milt kissed Rose and said, "I got some Passover wine, also alky from the lab for cocktails, if you remembered to get the grapefruit juice?"

"In the icebox," said Rose.

Milt looked at his son's supper plate and raised his eyebrows. "Liver soup, not chopped liver? What kind of a party is this?"

Peter was a vast blond boy, who looked like a Russian diplomat, and who beat a coca-cola bottle on a string against the legs of his chair as he ate. He was dressed for the Seder in an embroidered white suit his grandmother Rosen had sent. He also wore red rubber boots from which he would not be disengaged while awake; he was rapidly developing traditions of his own.

Milt turned to look at the table. He had heavy-lidded eyes, and it seemed a serious examination. "Is that how it should be?" he asked. Usually he trusted Rose completely—she had sharper sensibilities than he had, and he knew it.

He caught the tone of worry in her voice. "You can do it different ways. It's all right, Milt."

AT HOME in Chicago, tonight's Seder would be in charge of Rose's many aunts and her mother, with enormous quantities of food waiting in dining room and pantry and kitchen. The Rosen pattern included leavening the thick family sandwich with strangers—visiting buyers, Jewish or Gentile, caught in the Passover holidays, and strays of various kinds invited to share the feast.

When Milt, on the other hand, thought of feasting, he thought of the corner delicatessen, near his folks' cleaning and dyeing plant in Detroit: hot pastrami sandwiches, mustard in a paper twist; there was no center to his house, after his grandmother

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HAMLEN HUNT has published stories in *American, McCall's, Woman's Home Companion, Story, Good Housekeeping,* and other magazines, and two of her stories have been reprinted in O. Henry memorial prize volumes. She was awarded the Twentieth Century-Fox writing fellowship in 1944, and a story that she published in *Collier's* in August 1947 was awarded first prize in a contest sponsored by the Bureau for Intercultural Education. She was born in New York City and attended Columbia University and Radcliffe. She is the wife of Professor Mandel E. Cohen, of the Tufts Medical School, is the mother of two girls, and lives in Boston.

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died, and no cooking, nor welcoming of guests.

"You know everything," he said. "And you look wonderful in that black dress."

She did. She had a delicate, pale, Eastern look, from her clear white skin and the slight tilt to her eyes. Her brown hair waved back from her forehead, and she had a white flower behind one ear.

The Greenhills were poor this year, and lived on the first floor of one of those no-color wooden houses in which the side streets of Cambridge abound. For twenty-five dollars a month, they had a porch and yard for the baby, and a room for Dolores, the maid, not very bright, who dragged her feet, also encased in rubber footwear. Rose had water-painted the walls yellow and hung dark blue denim curtains, and the floor was blue instead of landlord-brown.

Milt interned at the City Hospital, which meant that for zero dollars a year, he worked from seven AM until two AM with every other night and weekend off, if the work was caught up, and no desperate circumstance detained him. Rose earned the family income by working as a secretary in the Hood Rubber Company, and was always bringing home what Milt called preventive footwear — galoshes, or boots, or red rubbers made to look like shoes—which she bought at employees' discount.

Milt swung his son into the air a few times, and dropped him back into the high-chair, murmuring, "I'd hate to lug him all the way out of Egypt," and then went in to change his clothes. When he came back, he made drinks from lab alcohol and canned fruit juice and powdered sugar. "These are good—something like daiquiris, only stronger." He handed a sample to Rose, but she only sipped at it. "What are we eating?"

"Different things," Rose said. "I used my Mom's recipes, and everything will be good, don't worry."

"So long as there's enough," Milt said.

He walked around, definitely uneasy, and Rose said, "I wish we hadn't asked such mixed people, some we know, some we don't. And I was thinking, maybe it isn't good in these times to go out of one's way to be different—"

"What's so different about a Seder?" said Milt.

She smiled, but Milt worked chiefly among Gentiles, and perhaps giving a Seder would stand in his way. It wasn't as if they were religious at all, because they weren't. "After all," Milt said, "we hung up the kid's stocking at Christmas."

THE Silvers arrived first. Louis was a doctor. When he met Frances Macomber, Ph.D., she was a Boston Irish girl who combed her orange hair flat, wore tortoise shell rimmed glasses, and was resigned to being an underpaid lab assistant at the City Hospital all her life. Then Louis discovered her, wrote some medical papers with her, fell in love, and married her. Francie loved him almost terribly, for he was all her loves together, and she longed to immolate herself on some Jewish altar for his sake, if she could only find one. Louis' father was a socialist, but Francie desperately absorbed Jewish lore from his rather stern mother. But she knew that no matter how hard she tried she could never manage to have been born a wealthy, beautiful Jewish girl.

"Such a skinny girl, too," said old Mrs. Silver. "How could she be a good cook for my poor Louis? And you know no Gentile can keep a clean house. Still, they say she has brains." Another sniff.

No wonder Francie prayed for children, and comforted herself with Bible memories of conception long delayed and late-born sons. She had come tonight in the way of lighting one more candle to her hopes—she turned any ceremony into another prayer for a son.

"How nice it looks," she said, mournfully, to Rose. "The herbs, and everything."

"You going to read the service in Hebrew?" Milt asked Louis. "You're the only one who knows enough, besides Dave."

Louis shrugged. "Dave can read it, if it's going to be read."

He was irritated with himself for having

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come to what he knew perfectly well was a religious ceremony: however well disguised, or watered down, that was what it was, and he had his principles. Besides, Francie was worried about making mistakes at a Jewish festival.

"Poor Louis, married a *shicksa*!" said old Mrs. Silver. To this day Francie was not sure whether a *goy* was the same as a *shicksa*, nor exactly what either word meant.

Dr. Petersen, a Swedish doctor on a Rockefeller Fellowship, arrived next. He was round-faced, a noted eater, and looked forward cheerfully to the new foods; and if ceremonies went with them, well and good. He could add to his mental notes on American customs. He drank three drinks in almost no time and remained imperturbable, trained on schnapps.

"Sh—," said Milt, peering out through the window as the bell rang. "Here's our class clientele."

"Tact!" said Rose.

Still, it was true, Milt thought: it was probably because the Jacobs' were coming tonight he felt so edgy. It made him shudder to remember the elegance of several of the Jacobs' cocktail parties in their fine, old house just off Harvard Square.

"Come in!" he shouted, and his natural warmth returned. His manners were crude, but he was genuinely hospitable. "It's good to have you here, at last."

"How nice to be here," said Eloise Jacobs, and all of them at once felt rather shabby and untidy. She was a small-headed, long-legged blonde, and she wore a brilliant green silk dress.

She also wore emeralds, and did psychiatric social work. Leo worked in the field of nuclear physics at Harvard, and tried not to look surprised when he tasted his drink.

The Jacobs' had found it amusing to leave the exterior of their enormous house much as it had been when vines covered it and pigeons murmured in the barn, now a three-car garage. But, such is Cambridge style, their modern furniture seemed slight and lost its balance in the great rooms. They used the color range apparently obligatory for Jewish intellectuals—gray, white, brown, with an occasional stripe of chartreuse green—owned a few fine French modern paintings, one of which, museum-lighted, took up an entire wall of what was definitely a drawing room.

The Jacobs' had an elaborate, smoothly geared social life. They lived brilliantly, well-adjusted to a kind of suspension. (It made some people nervous.) People they had known long ago never seemed to visit them, and it seemed unnatural not to find one old raincoat in the closet, or one album of family snapshots in the leather-topped desk. What were they leaving out, you wondered? Not their Jewishness. Not that at all. They had seven-branched silver candlesticks on their dining table.

"It's so interesting to look at ritual like tonight's," Eloise said to Louis Silver, "in the light of what Freud has taught us."

"Just what has he taught us?" Louis inquired, leaning forward.

Eloise quoted at random, ". . . the outstretched arm: this denotes the sword . . ." with a smile that recognized all phallic symbolism, everywhere.

Dave Solomon, plump and dark-eyed, was the last to arrive, and he was welcomed accordingly.

"Thank God, now we can eat!" said Milt, who was Dave's junior on the Fourth Medical Service at the hospital. "I suppose you want a drink first?"

"Save time," Dave said amiably. People who wanted to praise him said you would never know he was a psychiatrist, but his enemies said the same thing. "Give me all my drinks at once." Milt obligingly poured a tumblerful and handed it to him. "Start on that," he said.

Dave talked easily, but a certain awkwardness fell over the gathering when Rose left to put Peter to bed, and when Milt went into the kitchen to make more drinks. They could hear Rose promise her son she would not remove his rubber boots. "Certainly, you can sleep in them if you want," she said, soothingly. "Why not? Isn't this night dif-

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ferent from all other nights?"

"Why is that?" Dr. Peterson asked, interestedly. "What is this celebration?"

"Today," said Louis, in his dryest tones, "we celebrate the outgoing from Egypt. Matzoh stands for the poor bread which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt."

Glancing over at Eloise's emeralds, he added, "This year, we are slaves: next year we shall be freemen."

But perhaps, for an instant, most of them thought of Jews in Europe that night, people who had, literally, and recently, been slaves, and who were now freed, but who still walked strange roads, looking for a homeland.

Dave raised his glass, and bowed to Louis, whom he knew well. "Next year, in Jerusalem," he said.

THE words wove their own spell. Some of the phrases had beauty of their own, and to those who had heard them many times, they could not help but bring out, from the mat of past experience, memories, like bright, particular threads.

Dave, who did the reading, amiably, in a Southern accent, was startled to have his childhood return. His grandfather, a scholar and an embittered man, lived among unmarried, vengeful daughters, from whom he took refuge at the movies. He wore a beard and a black cap, and taught Dave Hebrew every afternoon. Once he bought his daughters an icebox, since they complained of the old: but their complaints rose to unearthly intensity when they saw the new one. "Who ever heard of a round icebox?" they cried. "You did," their father replied. "There's one right in your kitchen, nu?"

Dave read the service pretty steadily, while food was brought on, and Milt poured wine, and Dr. Petersen spread butter thickly on his matzoh.

Francie listened attentively, made all the replies in English, and looked shocked when Louis murmured, "When hagadah go, hagadah go," and he could not explain that this was not like mass: you could laugh, if you wanted to. He touched her hand under the table, so she would not have hurt feelings, but he was, as often, mildly annoyed at Francie's attitude.

The tumblers full of wine made from Concord grapes were lifted and set down, lifted and set down, while Dave read, "This bitter herb, what reason has it? The Egyptians embittered the lives of our forefathers. . . ."

There were other slaves. He remembered an old Negro who sat on the post-office steps. Had he weighed two hundred, three hundred pounds? He had elephantiasis, and his vast parts, which could no longer be called private parts, rested on the warm stone of the post office steps. He held a cane between his hands, and when townspeople greeted him, traditionally, "Dr. Doss!" (he sold witch charms and philtres) he replied, responsively, "Yes, suh, boss!"

Nan, the Solomon children's nurse, wore a bag of herbs around her dark neck, and said, on hearing of a neighbor's disaster, "Better him than me!" and he thought of Bessie Brown (who later killed a man with a razor) who put all her food—soup, meat, pudding, gin, and coffee—into one bowl, stirred, and ate it with a spoon. And of the half-witted boy who jerked in a kind of fit whenever someone shouted, "Dance, Caesar, dance! Mama's goin' buy you a new pair of pants!"

"What would Dr. F. make out of them?" he wondered.

From thinking of magical Viennese theories and how they blocked his way in his psychiatric research, his mind somehow moved to other words, familiar as those of the Seder, which he found sustaining. "It cannot be that axioms established by argumentation can suffice for the discovery of new works, since the subtlety of nature is greater many times over than the subtlety of argument." Francis Bacon wrote them, and Dave wished he had found them while his grandfather was alive.

Rose, gradually soothed by the way her guests ate the food she had cooked, only hoped that Dave, on his fourth helping, would not fall asleep the minute dinner was over. Internes and house officers ate to

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please any cook, but they also fell asleep with deadly ease. And what would the Jacobs' think?

Leo Jacobs was startled by the flavors of the food into what amounted, for him, to personal revelation. "My mother used to make just such chicken," he said. Eloise smiled faintly. Everybody knew about sons and mothers.

Louis Silver found himself, like Dave, troubled in mind. Religion was bad: he believed that, in the core of his heart. Yet he felt disturbed as he saw these disparate people around a table being united with ancient words so that, in spite of themselves, the occasion took on significance, and the wine became more than wine, and celery a bitter herb.

"Maybe people have to have occasions, with meaning in them, to celebrate," he thought, as if it were a new idea. "If I'm sure religion's the wrong thing to get them together, what's my alternative? A beer joint isn't enough: God knows sports-palasts were too much. Where are people going to meet, and to celebrate what festivals?"

People wanted words, and needed symbols: but none of the radical causes Louis had believed in had provided even one song that people could sing and remember. How could you use—but to good ends—what happened to people at certain sounds in music, or certain lines of poetry, or when, in a foreign place, they saw the flag of home? Maybe it was the most important thing in the world to know that, thought Louis suddenly.

Even Milt, who had persistently kidded as Dave read aloud, looked around at the table, and remembered that there had been a tableful of people at home, when his grandmother was alive, and that, after she died, kindness went, for him, and the home disintegrated within its walls.

He was a natural and easy father, and now he thought of Peter. If Jewish traditions would give him a feeling of substance, he would have them.

To Rose, he said, "Let's get the kid up, and give him some chicken."

"Later, Milt," she said. "He'll never get back to sleep."

She was tired now. At the kitchen end of the long table, she had kept jumping up because there was only Dolores to hinder—certainly it could not be said that she helped. Rose took plates and brought clean ones, carried in new platters and bowls of food, filled water glasses. But she was happy, in spite of her weariness. Tonight, for the first time since she had left Chicago, she had the feeling of belonging to a group, which she needed. The Rosens were a large, present-giving family, and she missed them.

Dr. Petersen was talking about Juletta, in Sweden.

"A very beautiful ceremony, also," he said. "With large eating. On Christmas morning, you walk out in the snow. Still dark, with stars. Bitter cold. The snow creaks. Everyone carries lighted candles to the church, and afterwards, we come home and have a big, big breakfast. Wonderful foods, all traditional, too, like at this feast."

He bowed to Rose.

Dave and Louis looked at each other across the table.

Dave said, "What about it?"

Louis shrugged. "There'll be other traditions," he said. But when?

"Now is concluded the ceremony of Passover after its law, according to all its customs and prescriptions," Dave intoned, yawning. "As we have lived to arrange it this time, may we live to celebrate it in the future. . . ."

"Amen," said Francie, getting the tone, but faltering back to the wrong religion. She blushed miserably, and looked over at the absent-minded Louis. "If it would only happen tonight," she thought.

Eloise, bored now, wanting to go home, read the small explanatory print on the last page of the hagadah. The kid was Israel, so the Jew always remembered . . . he could never be slaughtered. And suddenly there came to her mind what she usually forgot: the cousins, the uncles and aunts, in coun-

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tries that had been other countries, with all their possessions only dogeared papers, a book once written, stocks in a business that was no more, passports that took them nowhere.

She thought of how she would see her analyst tomorrow. "I must tell him how guilty I feel," she thought.

But would the guilt go away?

DOLORES, who dropped things, at last finished dish washing, and came shuffling through the living room, on her way to bed. She wore cossack-style galoshes, now, and carried a plate on which was stacked a dozen thick slices of bread and peanut butter. A bundle of funny papers Milt had brought her was under her other arm.

"Good night, all," she said, very dignified, and, when the door was closed, Rose said, "She had dinner, but she's got a custom. Every night, regularly, she takes a plate of food to bed with her. Like clockwork."

"She grew up in a state home," Milt explained. "Maybe she never got enough before."

Dr. Peterson was the first to leave, "I enjoyed the freedom dinner very much," he said.

Dave thought, "Once we were slaves." Once there was ignorance, now, in some fields, there was knowledge. It would be true in all fields, some day.

"What the hell," he thought. "All you can do is try to find out, and that's enough."

They were slow to depart. For a brief time, no one quite knew why, they had been joined together, around food, and perhaps by words: they had remembered a past, and hoped for a future: and no one wanted to break the spell.

A complicated business, Louis Silver thought, going home, feeling Francie pale and quiet beside him.

But Rose made it simple, as she always had to do. "It turned out a good party, didn't it?" she said, and then she walked into Peter's room and pulled off his rubber boots.

But she put them beside his pillow, so he would see them the first thing in the morning.

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THE NEW JEWS OF SAN NICANDRO

Some Latter-Day Recruits to the Covenant

FRITZ BECKER

SAN NICANDRO GARGANICO is a little town on the peninsula which forms the spur of the Italian boot. It is a place where time has come to a standstill. Yet San Nicandro has recently achieved a certain fame in Italy as the home of Donato Manduzio, called "Levi," the founder, prophet, and leader of the local group of "Jews," the newest, perhaps strangest addition to the House of Israel.

Overlooking eight miles of Adriatic coastal plain, fertile but malaria infested, the stone houses of San Nicandro crouch on the rocky slopes of the brush-covered Gargano mountain range. For its twenty thousand inhabitants daily life goes on as it did centuries ago; the fields and vineyards from which most of the San Nicandrians make their living are tilled with old, obsolete tools. In the town itself, housing and sanitary conditions are pre-historic. In short, San Nicandro differs in no way from thousands of other hot, dusty, filthy, mountain-perched towns scattered through the southern part of the Italian peninsula, far from the main lines of communications.

THERE have been fragmentary reports of a group of peasants in a remote corner of Italy who, after examining the various Western religious traditions, elected to embrace Judaism. Here for the first time is the fuller story of this strange and touching episode in present-day Jewish history. FRITZ BECKER is at present in charge of public relations for the Union of Italian Jewish Communities in Rome and is Rome correspondent for the Amsterdam daily *Het Vrije Volk*. Mr. Becker was born in Vienna in 1920, fled to Yugoslavia at the time of the German occupation, and in 1941 went to Italy, where he was confined in internment camps for two years. After the Italian armistice he was active with the underground in the mountains of central Italy.

GRAY, heavy-bodied Manduzio is a man of humble peasant stock, born into a family that never had anything to do with Jews and probably never even saw one. Now sixty-three and confined to his bed for the past twenty-seven years as the result of an injury sustained in World War I, Manduzio supports himself and his wife on an extremely meager government pension, supplemented by the profits of a tiny vineyard which is cultivated for him by a relative.

Growing up with the other youngsters of the town, Manduzio was a perfectly average boy. But the war and his injury changed all that. Condemned to complete immobility, Manduzio plunged headlong into the study of religious problems. Illiterate, he acquired an elementary-school education through tenacious study, and then passed his days and nights reading and discussing religious literature of all kinds with friends and neighbors. According to Manduzio's own account, his faith had been shaken ever since his return from the front. He began to have strange dreams, to see visions. Just at that time a Protestant preacher happened to come to the little town and distributed Bibles and held lectures. His success was spectacular: today the entire region is dotted with Protestant villages and San Nicandro alone has more than a hundred Protestant citizens.

With Manduzio's friends, however, the preacher's success only helped to smash whatever faith in the Catholic Church they might have still possessed. For Manduzio, nothing was to be gained by substituting Protestantism for Catholicism; Manduzio openly rejected the Protestant's sermons, and publicly polemicized against him, asserting his intention of going back to the original source of both religions. And after a popu-

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larized Italian edition of the Talmud somehow or other fell into Manduzio's hands, he began to preach Judaism to his friends and neighbors. He depicted Judaism as a religion of light, a living faith for the individual soul that enabled the individual believer to have personal relations with the Eternal without the need of a mediator, and contrasted this with the Protestant preacher's condemnatory definition of Catholicism—"deviation from the Law, intermingled with paganism."

Gradually, sympathizers gathered around Manduzio, single individuals and entire families—until their number amounted to about eighty. In San Nicandro today there are mixed families where either all males or all females of a single family are professing Jews and the other half are Catholics.

ALL this happened without the slightest influence or intervention from Italian Jewry, which for many years remained ignorant of Manduzio and his "Jewish community." When Angelo Sacerdoti, then Chief Rabbi of Rome, received Manduzio's first application on behalf of his fellow-believers to be recognized as Jews, he thought it a practical joke and did not bother to reply. But later letters aroused the rabbi's interest.

There are now a number of voluminous files in the archives of the rabbinate and the Union of Italian Jewish Communities which contain the correspondence exchanged through the years between San Nicandro and Rome. All the letters from San Nicandro are dated according to the Jewish calendar. They open with "beloved Brethren" and invariably close with a "Shalom" in distinguishable Hebrew letters and "Peace" added to it in Italian.

To look through these files is almost a spiritual experience in itself. How toilsome must have been the composition of this mass of letters for peasant hands, so unaccustomed to handling a pen! With how much labor had those hands written page after page of quotations from the Old Testament, copied translations of Jewish prayers, and how difficult it must have been for them to write in Hebrew letters!

The status of the little group of San Nicandro "Jews" remained that of "semi-Jews" for many years. The local priest sued Manduzio for propagandizing for a religion without having first constituted a community. A document issued by the local *prefettura* on February 1, 1936, says that Petrucci Antonio and Donato Manduzio, convicted of having violated article 650 of the Civil Code, are fined 315 lire each, the former for having exercised the functions of a Protestant minister without authority granted by the government, and the latter, Manduzio, "for abusively directing a Jewish prayer house." The fine of 315 lire, a considerable amount at the time, was paid collectively by the group.

IRONICALLY, it was the advent of racial persecution that gave the Jews of San Nicandro the opportunity to legitimize their claim as Jews. The entire group voluntarily shouldered the burden of oppressive legislation. Their status must have worried the Fascist authorities in Rome: were they to be considered Jews or not? Manduzio wrote a letter to the Union of Italian Jewish Communities inquiring about the attitude to be taken by his group in view of their anomalous position. As perhaps might have been expected, the Union suggested that they resort to a sort of "marranism" in order to escape the collective fate of the rest of Italian Jewry. Manduzio answered that he had never expected to get advice of that kind from the "teachers of Jewry," and that he and his fellow-believers were resolved to remain Jews.

They did so throughout that dark period. True, they were not much molested—but who could know in advance? At any rate, this action convinced Italian Jewry of their seriousness, and the Jewish community f San Nicandro Garganico was established as a sub-section of the Neapolitan Jewish community.

"On July 27, 1939," Manduzio writes, "I saw a vision, that the Creator sent me to a place in the open, about five or six miles

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from my home, and a voice said to me: 'The Great Empire is coming to conquer Italy.' And when I looked around I saw a company of soldiers approaching me, headed by their commander. Also in the vision I knew they were my friends and with great joy we shook hands. . . ."

With the liberation, which came for the Southern part of the Italian peninsula during the fall of 1943, a new period began for the Jews of San Nicandro. Palestinian units of the British Eighth Army passed through their town and for the first time Manduzio and his friends were given the opportunity to meet "real" Jews. Unanimously they voiced the desire to proceed to the land of "their fathers."

Manduzio himself has described the liberation: "During the first days of January 1944, convoys of army vehicles passed in order to gather firewood in the Gargano mountains. When we noticed that the vehicles had the Hebrew sign, we said to ourselves: these people are Jews, and we hoisted a flag with the same sign in front of my door on their return. But the drivers saluted without stopping. Next morning we got ready very early! As soon as the first vehicle came in sight, we put up our sign and the truck stopped in front of my house and so did the whole convoy. They entered our home saluting with 'Shalom.' Later lieutenants, captains, and majors of the Foggia and Lucera military camps came to see us. . . . There was also an army chaplain. . . ."

Until 1946 the life of the group of converts, so far as religious observance was concerned, was as incomplete as might be expected. They did observe, however, the fundamental laws of the Torah and the sabbath. As for dietary laws, one of the group writes: "The wife of the burgomaster, seeing my misery, offered to adopt one of my little daughters now four years of age, but I cannot accept, as I do not want to lose my child, abandoning it in that house of the burgomaster to paganism and unclean food."

Among the various problems that face the group is that of marriage, and this problem is not yet solved. In the long run, it may seriously endanger the very existence of the group. Marrochella, one of Manduzio's disciples, recently wrote to Rome: "A young man, Nazaro Di Salva, born in 1925, wants to take a wife, but in our community there is none. I therefore apply to you as president of the orphans and refugees that you might find one amongst them a girl willing to marry him and to come to San Nicandro. If you think it possible, write us immediately and we shall wait until you find a suitable person and write us again in order to make an appointment for making the girl's acquaintance so that our young man does not take a wife from among the other nations, which the Creator has forbidden; but if you do not wish to look after this matter, the young man will take a Gentile wife, which does not please the Creator, and it will not be our fault, since we do not know an orphan or refugee girl. Please write at once replying to this letter, and again when you have found the girl."

The search for a wife for the young man proved fruitless, and when the converts were so informed, they wrote: "You told us regarding the young man Di Salva that it is impossible to send an orphan or a refugee girl to San Nicandro. But the Creator does not allow mixed marriages, because thus one puts one's head into a noose, and we therefore ask you not as a brother but as a father to take care of our young man. And if you do not wish to do it and the young man insists on taking a wife of another faith, the Creator is judge that we have supplicated you. You said that the young man should come to Rome, but a young man without any experience could not stay away from home long enough in order to find a suitable girl; he would only go to Rome if you call him for the purpose of meeting an orphan or a refugee girl you might have found for him and if they like each other, they will get married and found a real Jewish family in San Nicandro. . . ."

In August 1946 a Rabbi and a *moel* from Rome made the long voyage to San Ni-

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candro to carry out the circumcision of the converts. The occasion was a great success, with thirteen circumcisions of males ranging in age from a few months to sixty-four years. "After so much longing," Manduzio wrote after the ceremony, "we have completed our arduous undertaking as far as the circumcision is concerned. We hope that after what has happened to us you will pay us a visit. I think you are aware of the economic condition of our small community, which is not in a position to pay the doctor at once the whole amount for his services during the circumcision. We ask you, therefore, to see that the Union of Italian Jewish Communities advances the sum to the doctor. We pledge ourselves to pay the debt back in installments."

A further letter by Manduzio on the subject reveals some of the complications that arose: "It is with pleasure that I am telling you that we are all well. In our midst, dear Cantoni [the President of the Union], the circumcision has taken place, but the Chief Rabbi did not let us know that we would have to pay all the expenses for the doctor. He only let me know about travel expenses. The doctor told me that we have to pay 30,000 lire and I am horrified since in this country of stones one does not earn enough to meet these expenses; but we are at least ready to pay for the journey and the food for Dr. Ravenna for the time he stayed. . ."

THUS the converts of San Nicandro Garganico have become part of the House of Israel. The youth is represented now in *Hachsharot* (agricultural training camps), preparing themselves for a life of work in their "homeland"; one of the boys is attending the preparatory class of the Italian Rabbinical Seminary in Rome, and is making a good showing. They now have a little prayer hall in San Nicandro, and Manduzio's most recent wish is "to write my name into the Golden Book of the Keren Kayemeth; but I know neither the words nor what I have to pay and you as teacher will suggest the words and let me know about the payment. The small family of San Nicandro conveys its Shalom to the brethren and sisters in Rome."

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THE MONTH IN HISTORY

THE BATTLEFRONTS IN THE COLD WAR

Czechoslovakia—The Western Union—Palestine

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

Attack in Prague

In 1939, when Hitler's troops marched into Prague, they did so ostensibly at the invitation and with the consent of the legal government of Czechoslovakia. But President Hacha's unwilling cooperation did not deceive anyone about the real nature of the transformation by which an independent country was turned into a "protectorate." The invasion of Prague was the direct stimulus for Neville Chamberlain's guarantees of the independence and territorial integrity of Poland and Rumania. From then on there were few in the West who any longer thought that war would be avoided.

Stalin's conquest of Czechoslovakia, like Hitler's, was accomplished by the utilization of at least some of the forms of law. Klement Gottwald had become Prime Minister after the Communist party emerged as Czechoslovakia's largest in elections that were only partly unfree. (The country's largest party, the Agrarian, had been outlawed, despite its leading role in the underground resistance and the government-in-exile; but its early collaboration with the Nazis offered some excuse for this. And a third of the country's population—the national minorities—had been disfranchised. But they were in any case in the process of being expelled, in accordance with the principles of the New Democracy.) If Gottwald's police had suppressed his political opponents in order to secure a parliamentary majority for the new cabinet which he formed after the representatives of the non-Communist parties resigned, he had in the first place at least secured control of the police legally—as Hitler had inside Germany itself. And his orders had been countersigned by President Edouard Benes, as Hitler's had been by President Hindenburg.

Hence it was still possible to pretend that the establishment of a Communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia, and the suppression of political dissent, involved no subversion of the democratic order. The Soviet Union—whose occupying army had originally dictated the granting of key governmental positions to the Communists, and whose nearby troops, even after their withdrawal across the frontier, had remained a potent reminder of the realities of Central European life—remained technically blameless. The Secretariat of the United Nations, acting on the advice of the Russian head of its legal department, was able to reject as "non-governmental" the charge of Czech delegate Jan

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In times when the month-by-month march of events is of such a character as to give little comfort to the hopes of men in general, and perhaps of Jews in particular, it is the thankless but necessary task of the writer of this department to winnow out the facts from the welter of belief, propaganda, actuality, and emotion that constitutes present-day public information and opinion. Maurice J. Goldbloom has had many years of experience as a news analyst, and brings to his work of appraisal here a rich store of knowledge in modern history and international affairs. The judgments expressed here are, of course, those of the writer, and in no sense represent or reflect official policy. Mr. Goldbloom was associate editor of the magazine *Common Sense*. He was born in New York City in 1911 and is a graduate of Columbia University.

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Papanek that his government had actually been the victim of Soviet aggression. Although Chile then officially filed the charge, and the Security Council overrode Russian and Ukrainian opposition to discussion of it, there was no reason to believe that anything more than an expression of high principles and restrained indignation would result.

Whatever the legalities of the situation in Czechoslovakia, the news from that country continued to make it plain that the legalities were not the whole story. Former cabinet members, secretaries of non-Communist parties, and other potential leaders of opposition to the new regime were arrested or reported missing in large numbers. Some of the missing subsequently turned up as refugees in Germany; others might quite possibly never reappear, the nature of police states being what it was. Suicides were also reported. One party official was said to have "killed himself" after signing a "confession" implicating his party in treasonable activities. The "confession" could now be used with no danger of his repudiating it.

Masaryk

The most spectacular of the suicides was that of Jan Masaryk. For Masaryk, perhaps more than any other non-Communist statesman, symbolized the idea of unlimited collaboration with the Soviet Union. Whatever his private leanings toward the West, he had suppressed them completely in his official role.

There were some who—in view of the frequent "suicides" of political opponents in police states—doubted the genuineness of Masaryk's. Yet it was difficult to see what purpose Masaryk's death could have served for the Communist regime in Prague. His presence in the cabinet could raise no difficult problems for them as long as they had complete control of all the means through which he might communicate either with his own people or with the world at large. And the magic of the Masaryk name was an invaluable asset, if they could keep it in their possession. It was, of course, possible that Masaryk had tried to escape abroad, and that his death had been incidental to a Communist attempt to ward off any such threat to the prestige of the new government. But it seemed far more likely that the suicide was genuine enough, and represented either the result of despair at the final failure of a political method on which he had staked everything, or a last attempt to reach the public opinion of the world through the only channel which Communist dictatorship left open.

Like Jan Masaryk, Edouard Benes had placed his hope for the future of Czechoslovakia in the good faith of the Soviet Union. When, in 1943, he signed a treaty of alliance with that power, he told Stalin: "We have signed an agreement for non-intervention in domestic affairs, and I know you will keep it." At least in public he kept this faith, even after Stalin had broken another provision of the same treaty recognizing Czechoslovakia's pre-Munich frontiers, by annexing Carpatho-Ruthenia.

When the cabinet crisis came, Benes had sought at first to mediate between the Communists and their opponents. He had announced that he could approve neither a cabinet without Communists, nor one from which the freely-chosen leaders of the other parties would be barred. When Klement Gottwald came to him with the list of a new and purged cabinet, he had at first declined to accept it. When Gottwald insisted, Benes told him: "You are talking to me like Hitler!" And then he yielded, as he had to Hitler in 1938.

Another Benes, however, was less pliant. The President's elder brother Vojta, one of the leaders of the anti-Communist faction of the Czech Social Democrats, spurned an invitation to join the new "National Front" and remain in a Social Democratic party purged of democrats. Instead, he announced his resignation from Parliament. Other Social Democratic leaders, such as Willem Bernard and Vaclav Meier, were expelled because of their refusal to go along with the new regime.

"Action committees" were set up to take over all political parties, as well as other independent organizations, and coordinate them with the regime. (Jewish community leaders protested that no such action was necessary in the case of Jewish organizations, since these had never harbored "reactionary elements." But their elected leaders were nevertheless replaced by new appointees who happened to be Communists.) Members of Parliament who refused to accept the new orientation of their parties were dropped,

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from the list of deputies. But this was less often necessary than one might have supposed, for many of those who had been ardent in their denunciation of the Communists now begged for the opportunity to support or even join them.

All in all, it was rather reminiscent of Germany in March 1933.

Defense in Brussels

THE response of the Western representatives in the United Nations to the Czech coup had certainly been something less than dynamic. But perhaps this merely meant, not that the West had failed to respond to the danger, but simply that nobody any longer thought of the UN as a vehicle through which danger could be averted.

Certainly the Brussels meeting of Britain, France, and the three "Benelux" states (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxemburg) indicated a recognition of the facts and a desire to do something about them. Before Prague, there had been a marked coolness on the part of some of the participants toward Ernest Bevin's proposal for a Western Union. But Klement Gottwald had made it very clear that there would no longer be any place for neutrals.

The result was that both France and the Low Countries agreed wholeheartedly to Bevin's proposal for a mutual assistance pact against aggression, linked with wider—though still largely undefined—plans for close cooperation in all fields. There was no question in anyone's mind that staff talks would soon begin, if they were not already under way, with a view to coordinating the military plans of the five countries, standardizing their equipment, and otherwise preparing for a war that nobody desired but almost everybody now expected.

The five countries that met at Brussels were not, of course, thinking of a defense in which they would act alone. On both sides of the Atlantic—and on both sides of the Iron Curtain, as well—it was recognized that the key to any Western structure, whether political or military or economic, lay in the United States.

Fortunately, if the United States was still inclined to do too little and too late, both the scale and tempo of its action were nevertheless increasing perceptibly. The character of the debate on the Marshall Plan was such as to lead to the redefinition of an isolationist as "a man who believes that four billion dollars is enough to give Europe for one year." And even such isolationists were now rather few.

Indeed, much of the criticism leveled against the Marshall Plan centered on the fact that it had no military features. Thus a subcommittee of the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Aid reported: "The economic cooperation of Western European countries envisaged in the European Recovery Plan can be achieved only if it is paralleled by political cooperation and a firm alliance for defensive purposes. Only if Western Europe is given the necessary political and military security will it be willing to rationalize its economy on a continental basis and thereby become economically self-sustaining once again."

Germany and the West

Now the political and military security of Western Europe were guaranteed, at least to the extent that a mutual assistance pact could achieve this aim. But this did not automatically assure the rationalization of Europe's economy on a continental basis.

Some steps toward such a rationalization had already been taken. The customs union of Belgium, Luxemburg, and the Netherlands was perhaps the most far-reaching of these. The practical problems involved in its implementation were still by no means solved—the differences in value between Belgian and Dutch currencies remained a major obstacle—but the will was there, and substantial progress was being made. Similarly, preliminary steps had been taken toward breaking down the tariff barriers between France and Italy.

But no such measures could compare in importance with the reintegration of Western Germany's productive capacity in the economy of Europe. Indeed, the entire drop in Western Europe's production, as compared to the pre-war period, was approximately equal to the decline in German production. And to a considerable extent, this drop was the result of deliberate Allied policy, expressed in the Potsdam agreement and the "level of industry" plan drawn up under it. Nor were the Russians solely or even primarily responsible for this. The lead in "de-industrialization" had, in fact, been taken

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by the United States; it had been supported by the French, and the British had given their reluctant consent.

What this had meant was now history. German industry in the West, operating on the average at a third of its capacity—a sixth in the case of steel, most crucial of all commodities for the rebuilding of Europe—had been unable to meet even the most elementary German needs, much less help in the reconstruction of other European countries. The United States and Britain had found themselves forced to spend several hundred million dollars a year for essential imports of food to keep the German dietary level at half the American, since Germany herself was not producing exports which could meet the bill. Germany's neighbors were hampered in their reconstruction by the lack of German machinery on which they were dependent, and at the same time suffered from the loss of German markets for their own products.

If the Russians had not been primarily responsible for the Potsdam settlement, they were nevertheless the only ones who benefited by it. For their zone was able to produce enough food for both its inhabitants (on a level equal to that in the West) and for the occupying troops. And by utilizing the industrial capacity of their zone to the full—without worrying about how this fitted in with the "level of industry" agreement—they were able to extract substantial reparations out of its current production.

The British, whose zone had the greatest potential productivity and the greatest actual deficit, were the first to weary of this situation, in which they found themselves paying reparations to Germany for the benefit of the Soviet Union. The United States, which was not so sensitive to economic realities as impoverished Britain, was able to hold out somewhat longer. But eventually it, too, began to tire of the prospect of paying huge sums indefinitely as the price of keeping Germany's factories and steel mills idle. With the increasing tension between East and West, the two powers found ample basis for acting without Soviet consent in Russia's disregard of the Potsdam agreement's provision that Germany be treated as an economic unit. But they were still to some extent hampered by French obstruction, based on France's desire to expand her own industries, particularly steel, at Germany's expense.

The London Agreement

Now, at a meeting in London held simultaneously with the one in Brussels, full agreement on Germany appeared to have been reached by all the Western powers. To be sure, the agreement was so far only on rather general principles, and hitches could develop in practice. But they were not likely to be major ones, since the same forces which had produced the agreement on principles would continue operating to make it work. The most important of these forces was the Soviet threat, which created a sense of the urgency of using all available resources in reconstructing Western Europe as quickly as possible. There was some doubt, however, whether this alone had been enough to win over the French. (For the other nations involved, it—and their own needs—had been ample.) It was reported that the American representatives had felt it necessary to point out that, if Germany's capacity were not more fully utilized, it might be extremely difficult to get Congressional approval for a second year's Marshall Plan appropriation large enough to make up for that failure.

More important, perhaps, than any of the specific items was the fact that the powers took as their starting point "the necessity of insuring the economic reconstruction of Western Europe including Germany, and of establishing a basis for the participation of a democratic Germany in the community of free peoples." Declaring that "delay in reaching these objectives can no longer be accepted," the conferees went on to recommend "that the combined zone and the French zone should be fully associated in the European Recovery Program, and adequately represented on any continuing organization." (This provision has now been implemented by the second conference of the sixteen nations participating in the Marshall Plan.)

Thus far, there could be no doubt as to either the meaning or the importance of the agreement reached in London. Less clear was the statement that "Consideration was given by all delegations to the establishment of an international control of the Ruhr on which Germany would be represented . . . to insure that the economic resources of this

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area should not again be used for the purposes of aggression and that there should be adequate access to the coal, coke, and steel of the Ruhr for the benefit of extensive parts of the European community, including Germany. Agreed recommendations will be submitted to the governments concerned on the scope and form of this control." This sounded well enough, at first reading. But on further examination, its meaning began to recede into ambiguity. Terms like "adequate access" could cover a multitude of contradictory views and conflicting ambitions. Was "adequate access" to the coal of the Ruhr, for instance, to be determined by the dictates of technological efficiency, or by the requirements of an expanded productive capacity which in many cases was still in the blueprint stage? Moreover, what would the relation of the control body be to other existing bodies already engaged in allocating German resources? Thus, all the coal of the Ruhr—as well as that of other European countries—was subject to allocation by the European Coal Commission already. Would this control be replaced by one affecting German production alone? If so, it hardly seemed a step toward an integrated European economy.

Indeed, international control of German resources could only be significant in a situation in which obstacles still existed to the free flow of European resources in general to the places where they could be best utilized. And it was largely in terms of the extent to which such obstacles were removed that Europe's contribution to her own reconstruction would have to be judged. The danger in any sort of international control of German resources appeared to be that it might serve as an excuse for postponing a similar control of all European resources. Again, it might develop into a cover under which nations participating in the control would seek to use it to serve their individual interests as against those of Europe as a whole. Perhaps, however, all that was meant was that the occupying powers were ready to delegate some of the functions which they at present exercised to a body which would include representatives of the other European states and the German people.

Equally ambiguous was the agreement "that a federal form of government, adequately protecting the rights of the respective states but at the same time providing for adequate central authority, is best adapted for the reestablishment of German unity at present disrupted." For the word "adequate" covered a multitude of disagreements. Was the standard to be that of the Weimar Republic, the United States, the Soviet Union, the Swiss Confederation—or none of these?

But despite its inadequacies and ambiguities, the London agreement indicated a fundamental unity of approach. And this, above all, was what was needed.

The Third Force

WHATEVER plans the governments of Europe and the United States might make, their success would necessarily depend in large measure on the social forces which could be rallied to their support. And the most strategically significant of these was labor. For neither economic nor political plans could function if the leadership of labor were in the hands of groups determined to prevent it. The Soviet Union and Communists all over the world were well aware of this. So, today, was the United States Department of State.

In the United States, labor support had been forthcoming at once, from both the AFL and CIO. Only the Communist-controlled unions had denounced the Marshall Plan as an imperialist attempt to enslave Europe, and a step toward war with the Soviet Union. In Europe, labor's initial response had been favorable—again with the exception of the Communist sector—but rather hesitant. But since Communist influence was far more important in most European labor movements than it was in the United States, it was essential to organize non-Communist labor to participate wholeheartedly in the execution of the Plan.

One major obstacle stood in the way, however. All the leading European labor movements—Communist and non-Communist alike—were affiliated with the World Federation of Trade Unions. Both the CIO and the British Trades Union Congress were loath to do anything which might lead to the disruption of the WFTU. They therefore spent several months trying to persuade the Russians to permit the WFTU to take up the Marshall Plan and act in support of it. Not too surprisingly, the Russians showed

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no enthusiasm whatsoever for this idea. And with their allies, they dominated the administration of the WFTU.

Meanwhile the AFL—which had always refused to join the WFTU on the ground that the organization's Russian affiliates were not free labor unions at all—was urging the British TUC to call a conference outside the framework of the WFTU. Finally, disturbed by the Russian success in blocking WFTU action on the question and even postponing the Executive Committee meeting at which it was to have been discussed, the TUC yielded. The resulting conference was a striking display of labor harmony. From the United States, delegates attended on behalf of AFL, CIO, and railroad brotherhoods. The complete agreement of all three major groups in the American labor movement went far to persuade the European unions that the Marshall Plan was not intended to enslave them. They found it easy —since the Communist-controlled groups had boycotted the conference—to agree on a program for labor participation in and support of the Plan. At the same time, the representatives of American labor assured their European colleagues that they would see to it that the Plan was not used as an instrument to support anti-labor elements in Europe. And in giving this assurance, they seemed to be on reasonably safe ground, unless the temper of Washington changed sharply.

Another aspect of the mobilization of the European "Third Force" in support of the Marshall Plan was the conference of Socialist parties called by the British Labor party. This conference had been proposed after the Antwerp Conference of Socialist parties by delegates dissatisfied with the fence-straddling resolutions which had been adopted there in a vain effort to win the support of Socialist parties from beyond the Iron Curtain. Here, too, the British had at first held back because of their fear that a split might result. But as one "Socialist" party after another in Russia's Europe either merged or was merged with the Communists, it became increasingly clear that there was no hope of preserving even the paper unity which had existed at Antwerp. As a result, the British Labor party not only agreed to call a conference of Socialist parties on the Marshall Plan, but invited to it the anti-Communist Socialist groups from Italy—groups which had previously been barred from all international Socialist conferences in favor of the pro-Communist Socialists led by Pietro Nenni.

It seemed clear that, as a result of increasingly open Russian and Communist aggression on the one hand, and the Marshall Plan on the other, a fairly firm alliance was being cemented between the United States and the European advocates of the Third Force. How long it would last, and how successfully it would achieve its aims, was still to be seen. But if the Marshall Plan were carried out in the spirit in which it appeared to have been initiated, and if the scale on which it operated proved to be adequate, then there would seem to be no reason why this collaboration should not prove a fruitful one for some time to come. Whether this was a sufficient and not merely a necessary condition for Europe's salvation was still uncertain.

The Road Back

One of the arguments which had carried the greatest weight in winning the UN Assembly for partition was that this was a solution whose finality would lead to its acceptance. In fact, as it turned out, it was this very appearance of finality which stirred the Arabs to adamant resistance. For it set a term on their freedom to act.

As long as the mandate remained in force, and seemed likely to do so indefinitely, both Arab and Zionist leaders could hope that it would eventually be replaced by a state more to their liking. Their conflicts were all directed toward improving their positions in anticipation of an eventual showdown. But pending that showdown, there was always the possibility of agreement, and there was in any case no such sense of desperate urgency as appeared in the months after the passage of the partition resolution.

It was this urgency which was primarily responsible for the increase in both the scale and intensity of the struggle for Palestine. And as long as it was present, there seemed little hope of conciliation.

Hence when the United States, France, and China appealed to the contestants in Palestine to agree to a truce, it surprised

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no one that Zionists and Arabs alike set as the condition of acceptance the granting of their full political demands. For the Zionists, this meant the implementation of partition; for the Arabs, its suspension.

Meanwhile, it became clearer each day that whatever was said, the partition resolution was in fact not being put into effect. The Palestine Commission remained at Lake Success, vainly appealing for support from the powers in the execution of the task which they had delegated to it. The Arabs of Palestine took no steps toward setting up a Provisional Council of Government for the proposed Arab state, nor did they give any signs of accepting the invitation extended to them to join the representatives of all Jewish parties—including both Revisionists and Communists—in the Provisional Council set up for the Jewish state. True, the nuclei for Jewish and Arab militias did exist, despite the refusal of Britain to permit their formal organization as such. But these militias, under whatever name, seemed unlikely to make the task of the Palestine Commission much easier.

Even at Lake Success, little progress was made. The Trusteeship Council failed to reach final agreement on a statute for the Free City of Jerusalem. The Economic and Social Council failed to elect the members it was supposed to name to the committee entrusted with establishing the economic union of the two unborn states. And above all, the Security Council showed no signs of agreeing on the necessity of an international force—let alone its composition. Instead, it referred the whole question to the permanent members for discussion and examination. Meanwhile, May 15 and the withdrawal of Britain drew nearer.

Of the permanent members of the Security Council, one—Britain—refused even to participate in the discussions officially. Another, China, made it clear that the same considerations which had caused her to abstain in the Assembly vote made her unwilling to take any action designed to enforce partition. France, ruling millions of Moslems in Africa, was only a little less reluctant to act, despite her last-minute support of partition in the Assembly. And cooperation between the United States and Russia on any practical steps was rendered at least difficult by developments in parts of the world other than Palestine. The result seemed likely to be a steady progress toward catastrophe in Palestine, to the accompaniment of much wringing of hands and little action at Lake Success.

Under these circumstances many of those in Washington who had participated in the framing of the partition plan and helped to push it through the Assembly began to look for a way out. Above all, what they desired was something which would postpone the showdown which they dreaded. But at first, they hesitated to face the loss of prestige involved in calling for the reversal of a policy whose adoption had been so largely the result of American pressure. Hence even in proposing that the Palestine question be referred to the Big Five for study, the United States delegate reiterated his support of the partition plan. Yet it was impossible to conceal the waverings and doubts in Washington.

It was therefore not altogether without warning that on March 20 the United States delegate, Warren R. Austin, effectively reversed the American position in a three-point statement to the Security Council. This asserted:

"1. The plan proposed by the General Assembly is an integral plan which cannot succeed unless each of its parts can be carried out. There seems to be general agreement that the plan cannot now be implemented by peaceful means.

"2. We believe that further steps must be taken immediately not only to maintain the peace but also to afford a further opportunity to reach an agreement between the interested parties regarding the future government of Palestine. To this end we believe that a temporary trusteeship for Palestine should be established under the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations. Such a United Nations trusteeship would be without prejudice to the rights, claims, or position of the parties concerned, or to the character of the eventual political settlement. . . .

"3. Pending the meeting of the pro-

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posed special session of the General Assembly, we believe that the Security Council should instruct the Palestine Commission to suspend its efforts to implement the proposed partition plan."

Mr. Austin's statement did not, of course, preclude partition as an ultimate solution. But it was certainly inconsistent with the implementation of the Assembly plan on May 16. This was true whether or not the United States was able to muster a two-thirds vote to repeal that plan. Nor was this fact in any way altered by President Truman's subsequent declaration that trusteeship was only intended as a temporary measure to bridge the gap created by Britain's withdrawal, and that he was still in favor of partition.

Many observers—even some who had been sceptical of the possibility of enforcing partition—doubted whether the shift to trusteeship at this time would offer much hope of peace in Palestine. Nevertheless, it was a proposal which at least on paper had much to recommend it. In the first place, it had been advocated—at different times—by both Jews and Arabs. The former had originally proposed it as a substitute for the British mandate; the latter had presented it to the General Assembly as a last minute alternative to partition. It had been recommended as an interim regime in the unanimous report of the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry—a body which had included such champions of the Zionist cause as Bartley Crum. The Trusteeship Council, unlike the Security Council, was not subject to a veto—and in any case the Soviet Union had boycotted it. (But since there was no provision in the Charter authorizing the Trusteeship Council to raise armed forces, it seemed doubtful whether it would really be possible to bypass the Security Council in fact.) And what appealed most to the proposal's present sponsors was the fact that it appeared to offer a breathing spell.

But unfortunately, the partition resolution had aroused forces which it would not be easy to put back to sleep. Whatever Zionists might have thought about a United Nations trusteeship in 1946, they regarded it in 1948 as an attempt to steal the state they had regarded as almost within their reach. The Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi jointly announced that they rejected trusteeship and would proclaim a state on May 16. The Arabs, who felt that any retreat from immediate partition was a victory for their cause, were readier to swallow trusteeship. But they made it very clear that they regarded it as a very temporary bridge leading to an Arab Palestine, and they demanded that the Arab League play a leading part in its administration. The British, plagued by the continued murder of their soldiers and officials by both Jewish and Arab terrorists, seemed no more anxious to remain and be shot at in the name of trusteeship than in the name of partition.

Hence the major problem which had wrecked partition—that of implementation—remained unsolved under trusteeship. There might be less Arab violence to deal with But the Irgun and the Stern gang would remain, as they had for years, a major threat to the peace and security of Palestine. And it seemed probable that they would recruit many new supporters, in the mood of desperation which was likely to engulf large parts of the Zionist movement. True, their strength depended on funds raised in the United States—as did the strength of Zionism in general. Whether this country would permit the gathering and transfer of millions of dollars to fight a decision in which it had taken the initiative, as it had permitted American dollars to finance opposition to the British, seemed questionable. Yet, considering that it had been the godfather of the Jewish state, it would be extremely difficult for it to participate actively in preventing the establishment of that Jewish state by the Zionists, if the latter attempted to implement the partition resolution by themselves in spite of everything. And if the situation were permitted to develop without any active international intervention, no one knew how many would die before exhaustion produced a truce.

The descent of Avernus was traditionally easier than the road back.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

A CITIZEN OF SYRACUSE

Grandpa and GLA–JUT

FLORENCE LOWE

ALONG with other depressing phenomena of middle age I have developed what is known as "trombone eyesight," an affliction that necessitates sliding a letter out to arm's length before being able to read it. Movie marquees are duck soup at five hundred feet, but anything within elbow length is pea soup.

And so it is with the persons and places of my young years. Of my contemporaries today, I can only say that there are some who are out of focus, and others whom I can't see at all. But let me look back to Syracuse, New York, in 1906, when I was ten years old, and all becomes clarity itself. Events and situations which then seemed obscure and hard to understand now fall easily into a pattern, as in a winning game of solitaire. Friends and neighbors take "size places" like grade school children on a marching line, and leading them all, the biggest of the lot, is my Grandfather Lowe.

HERE we find but another example of the way in which learning has been a constant comfort and solace to Jews under the buffetings of fate: Grandfather Lowe read the Encyclopaedia Britannica from cover to cover in order to keep from brooding on the tragedy of being possessed of (and possibly by) four unmarried daughters. FLORENCE LOWE, who gives us this page from her childhood in Syracuse, was born in San Francisco, California, and educated in New York. She is at present director of the Berkeley Marionettes and has written innumerable plays for the Marionette theater. She has also written a book for children, *Somebody Else's Shoes,* just published by Rinehart.

GRANDPA was a fierce, embittered old man with a hawk face and wild white hair. In his quieter moments he resembled an out-of-drawing picture of Edgar Allan Poe. During his frequent periods of *Sturm und Drang* he resembled a male Valkyrie riding the tempest. He lived with my four unmarried aunts and made their life a hell.

Fanny, the eldest, kept house and did the cooking. Carrie and Lottie, the twins, worked respectively in Henocksburg's and F. J. West's millinery stores on South Salina Street. Tracy, the youngest, taught the eighth grade in Croton School.

Aunt Fanny, who was of that breed of women known as "a perfect saint," had the hardest time of it, since she was home all day with Grandpa, but she did the best she could. She was quite hard of hearing, and this helped a good deal, especially when the old man got to brooding on her and her sisters' unwed and unwanted state. At such times, sitting in the rocker by the back parlor window, he would begin by muttering under his breath, getting louder and bitterer by the minute until his volume control was full up, and you could hear him clear out to East Genesee Street. At this, Aunt Fanny in the kitchen would cup her hand behind her ear, drop whatever she was doing, and come running in.

"Did you call me, Pa?" she would ask.

Grandpa would answer in the voice of one who is standing on one Alp and hailing a buddy on another.

"*Dumme Bahama!*" he would bellow. "Get me GLA-JUT."

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Aunt Fanny would trot over to the sectional bookcase and take down that volume of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Grandpa would snatch it and subside, breathing fire and flame.

The encyclopaedia was his fountain and his shrine, his refuge and his escape. Hunched over in the leather rocker, the volumes piled up at his feet, he would read, chuckle to himself, mutter, call on his God, and read again.

At such times, when my ten-year-old self would come stamping in on roller skates, he would call me *"gottverdammtes Kind,"* and give me a nickel. The nickel was understood by both of us to be protection money which he paid to be left in peace, and provided me with a small but steady income that I spent on candy and dill pickles at Edelstein's grocery. I brought him, at his request, STR-ZWO, ELE-GLA, and NOS-PRE, and stamped out again, no hard feelings on either side.

THE encyclopaedia, however, wasn't the only thing in Grandpa's life. He had friends. Two or three times a week they would drop in for pinochle and Aunt Fanny's coffee *kuchen*. Mr. Bondy, Mr. Finkelstein, Mr. Wexler, and Mr. Whalen; all old men with heavy gold watch chains, unpressed trousers, and five-cent cigars. Grandpa had a low opinion of them all and made no secret of it. To him Mr. Bondy was a *kayliv,* Mr. Finkelstein a *lump,* and Mr. Wexler a jackass. Mr. Whalen he dismissed as "an educated man but a *goy.*" He could out-holler any of them in a political argument and never heard any of them venture an opinion on any subject whatever without trembling impatience. If the speaker continued with his thought, Grandpa would bellow "QUATCHQUATCHQUATCH!"

Yet, in spite of insults, abuse, and the fact that Grandpa merely tolerated them, his friends continued to seek him out. It may be that they were respectful of his vast store of encyclopaedic information. Certainly they looked up to him as a widely traveled man. For Grandpa in his earlier years had journeyed far up and down the Erie Canal and through the towns and villages of all upper New York State. He had been a peddler of spectacles.

To hear Grandpa tell it, it was a cultured life and a rewarding one. His clients were bankers, lawyers, and ministers of the gospel, all counting the days till he arrived on his semi-annual visit—and vying with each other for the privilege of giving him bed and board (or, as he put it, "hospital"). Refined was their conversation! Exquisite their manners! Their intelligence was surpassing. They all looked up to Grandpa and called him Doctor.

"There are no more such people now," he would say, shaking his head sadly.

Maybe he believed it. The truth can only be conjectured. Snail-slow canal boats . . . cindery trains . . . the hitch picked up in a buggy . . . frozen ruts in wintertime . . . mud in spring . . . yard-dogs snarling and snapping at gates . . . the musty-smelling bed in the country hotel . . . Grandpa must have experienced all of these things. But if he did, he never mentioned them. He was a proud man.

BESIDES his encyclopaedia and his pinochle sessions, Grandpa had other resources. One of these was the book agent game. This he played in a corner of the front parlor behind the Nottingham lace window curtains, overlooking the porch. Sitting in a Vernis Martin chair with gold balls up and down the back, he would peer out from behind the curtain and, like a spider in his web, bide his time. Sometimes he waited for days, but he was never disappointed. Because of Aunt Tracy's school connections, her name was on the sucker list of more than one publishing house, and Grandpa had only to be patient, and a victim, satchel in hand, would mount the steps and ring the bell.

This was what he had been waiting for. Bounding out of the chair he would tear to the door and fling it open. Then in a voice like thunder he would demand to know the caller's business.

The book agent, faced by what was obviously a madman, would take one look at the wild hair, the glittering eye, and the veins standing out at the neck, and back away, stammering something about seeing Miss Lowe.

This was Grandpa's big moment.

"I'M MISS LOWE!" he would thunder. "STATE YOUR BUSINESS!"

The rest of the day he would walk about

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the house, chuckling aloud reminiscently.

However, the pitcher went to the well once too often. That day, Grandpa opened the door to a quietly elegant stranger who introduced himself as a Mr. Piercy, and intimated that he had been sent to consult with Miss Tracy Lowe on school business. Grandpa ushered him into the front parlor and there proceeded to entertain him until Aunt Tracy's arrival. They discussed the McKinley administration and the Panama Canal, and Grandpa was informative concerning the Great Wall of China (CHI-ELD) and the construction of cantilever bridges (AUS-CHI). They passed a delightful half hour and Grandpa was genuinely sorry when Aunt Tracy arrived. He said as much to Mr. Piercy and shook him heartily by the hand. Then he presented him formally to his daughter.

Mr. Piercy reached into the inside pocket of his coat and produced a glossy paper folder which he opened up accordion-wise to a length of three feet. On it was printed, in three colors, an accurate reproduction (full size) of the backs of ten books.

"Miss Lowe," he recited rapidly, "I represent the Home Library of Family Medicine."

Aunt Tracy, telling the story later, would say, "So there was this book agent, talking away a mile a minute, and I took one look at Pa, and thank goodness, I had presence of mind. I said to myself, 'My God! He's going to have a stroke!' His eyes were glassy, you know, and he was sort of struggling for breath. So I said to the man very quietly and quickly, 'You'll have to leave. My father is ill.' "

Aunt Lottie said, "Pa, I just can't understand why you act like such a devil about book agents. After all, you used to do the same thing yourself . . . going from house to house when you were peddling."

Grandpa cast his eyes to the ceiling, and demanded of his God to be told why he, who had lived a blameless life, should be cursed in his old age with four virgin daughters aged forty and upward. Then, addressing Aunt Lottie in Hebrew as a damned harlot, he advised her (in German) to hold her flapping tongue in her stupid mouth.

They were at the supper table when this happened, and Grandpa, with a trembling hand, helped himself to some of the floating island pudding—a custard of soupy consistency with blobs of meringue swimming about on the surface. As Grandpa filled his dish, the spoon slipped and a generous portion spilled down the front of his clothes. There were gentle shrieks from around the table, and a chorus of "Pas." The old man looked from daughter to daughter and there was an evil look in his eye. His sense of power, weakened since the Mr. Piercy incident, began to charge up like a storage battery. It dawned on him that here was a brand new field of endeavor. Deliberately he spilled another spoonful on his vest, and as Aunt Fanny rushed to mop him up, he bellowed "GEHWEG!"—it shook the bead fringe on the chandelier.

After that there was no holding him. Soup, eggs, gravy, coffee, tea, ales, wines, liquors, and green vegetables—all found a home on Grandpa's one suit. Aunt Fanny spent hours over the ironing board with benzine and ammonia, but the old man spilled faster than she could clean.

The climax came one cold Friday in November, when Aunt Tracy was being escorted home from school by her principal, Mr. Conan. At the corner of Harrison Street and Irving Avenue, he nudged her and pointed.

"Miss Lowe," he said, "just look at that picturesque old beggar."

"I looked," said Aunt Tracy, "and, my God, it was Pa."

Something had to be done. The aunts got together and next day Aunt Tracy went to Dey Brothers and bought Grandpa a new suit. It was of black serge, and of a cut and texture generally associated with public monuments, but it was whole, clean, and free from foreign matter. That night, while Grandpa slept, they cremated the old suit in the furnace, and laid the new clothes on a chair beside his bed.

"He'll never put them on," said Aunt Carrie.

"He'll put them on or stay in bed," declared Aunt Tracy grimly.

But she was mistaken. Grandpa didn't put on the new suit, nor did he stay in bed. For one solid week he walked about the house, read his encyclopaedia, received his friends, and took his meals in his long gray underwear. It grew very cold and the feeble heating plant struggled as always to heat

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eleven rooms, but Grandpa held on. Cursing scarifying curses in German, Hebrew, and English, he sat on the warm air register in a corner of the back parlor floor, and held out.

HE HELD out until Saturday, when he realized that if he didn't put on the new clothes he couldn't go to shul. Shul was one of the red stones in Grandpa's week, and neither ill health nor the elements had ever kept him away. So with language unbefitting the Sabbath, he hooked his suspenders into the new pants and put them on.

At five o'clock that afternoon Mrs. Gasman, the rabbi's wife, came to call on Aunt Tracy. She was a large woman with adenoids, and she looked nervously at Grandpa sitting by the window with his books. She indicated that her business was of a private nature, and asked Aunt Tracy if there wasn't a place where they could talk undisturbed. Aunt Tracy escorted her into the front parlor, and there, behind closed doors, she broke down.

"Tracy," she said, her large chin quivering, "you've *got* to keep your father home from Temple."

"Well, I guess not!" said Aunt Tracy, bristling. "We pay for our pew, and I guess Pa has a right to go if he feels like it."

"Doctor is on the verge of nervous prostration," wailed Mrs. Gasman. "Your father answers him back."

"What?" said Aunt Tracy, aghast.

"Yes," said Mrs. Gasman, "and he says the responses so loudly that everybody looks at him, and he pounds with his cane, and today Doctor preached a beautiful sermon and your father *ruined* it."

"What did Pa do?"

"Well, at the end, Doctor said, 'I could speak indefinitely on this subject,' and your father pounded and yelled out *'Genug! Genug!'*"

Aunt Tracy looked at her shoes for some time. Then . . .

"I'll do what I can," she said, "but it'll just about kill Pa."

It just about did. Try as they might, the aunts couldn't move the trustees of Temple Israel. Grandpa was not suspended. He was expelled.

He took it hard. He became much quieter about the house, took to his bed for longer and longer periods, and refused to see his friends. His spirit was not yet entirely broken, but tiny cracks appeared on the surface, like those on an old platter that goes too often into the oven. While he still called his daughters *"Dumme Bahama"* and *"verdammte klafta,"* his heart wasn't in it. His fires were dying down.

"We might as well face facts," said Aunt Tracy. "After all, Pa's eighty-three. We can't expect him to live forever."

And then, suddenly, Grandpa secured a new lease on life. He became, or so he said, an atheist. However, his was not the cold, impersonal atheism of Ingersoll. Grandpa didn't deny God. He was just mad at him. God was boss of Temple Israel, and God had allowed Temple Israel to exclude Grandpa. Grandpa killed two birds with one stone. He cursed God and Temple Israel in one breath.

GRANDPA died in 1907 at the age of eighty-four. The Syracuse *Post Standard* gave him a full column obituary with his picture at the top. It was headed EARLY RESIDENT PASSES ON. It told how Grandpa had emigrated from Germany in 1849, and had settled in Syracuse, where he had entered the optical business. It went on to say that he was survived by five daughters, and ended: "It was Mr. Lowe's oft-expressed wish that he might be taken from this vale of tears."

It was. I distinctly remember Grandpa sitting up in bed in his white nightshirt, and shaking his fist at the ceiling.

"Du gottverdammter Gott!" he would holler. "Come on! Smite me! I *dare* you to smite me! I'll fool you. . . . I WANT to die. How do you like THAT?"

I often think how fine it would be if Grandpa Lowe could have been alive today. Radio quiz programs would have been his meat. With that store of knowledge gathered during the long years with PRI-STO, AUS-CHI, and GLA-JUT, he might have kept us all supplied with refrigerators, pressure cookers and wrist watches—to say nothing of innumerable complete sets of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Contrasting Patterns of Justice

AHAD HA'AM

AHAD HA'AM ("One of the People") was the pen name of Asher Ginzberg (1856-1927), who was born in Kiev, the son of a Hasid, and grew up to become one of the greatest essayists of modern Hebrew and leader of that aspect of Zionism which looks to Palestine as a center of cultural inspiration rather than as a focus of Jewish political power.

The translation of the present essay is taken, by the publisher's permission, from the Ahad Ha'am volume of the "Philosophia Judaica" series published by The East and West Library of the Phaidon Press in Oxford, England. The contents of the book were selected and translated by Leon Simon, who also provided it with introductory notes and a glossary. Dr. Simon's preface to the essay published here follows:

IN 1909 Mr. Claude G. Montefiore, a leading member of the Anglo-Jewish community and a pioneer of 'Liberal' Judaism in England, published a two-volume commentary on the Gospels under the title *The Synoptic Gospels*. The book was avowedly intended to help Jewish readers towards a better appreciation of the New Testament; and, though it was of course written from what its author regarded as a Jewish standpoint, . . . it exhibited what orthodox Jews could not but regard as a distinct leaning towards Christianity. To Ahad Ha'am—then living in London—it was a sign-post indicating clearly whither the Reform movement in Judaism, divorced from Jewish nationalism, must lead. He was moved by it to write an essay (published in 1910 under the significant title 'Between Two Opinions') of which the thesis is that compromise between Judaism and Christianity is impossible, and that 'the Gospels can be introduced only into a Judaism which has lost its own true spirit and is nothing but a corpse.'

The only part of the essay here translated is that in which the author deals with the fundamental difference between the Jewish and the Christian outlook, and develops the illuminating theory that the religious and ethical conceptions of Judaism derive their specific character from the ineradicable bent of the Jewish mind towards the abstract. The rest of the essay is a criticism of Mr. Montefiore's book.—ED.

IF THE heathen of the old story, who wished to learn the whole of the Torah while he stood on one foot, had come to me, my reply would have been: "'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness'—that is the whole Torah, and the rest is commentary."

What essentially distinguishes Judaism from other religions is its absolute determination to make the religious and moral consciousness independent of any definite human form, and to attach it without any mediating term to an abstract incorporeal ideal.

We cannot conceive Christianity without Jesus, or even Islam without Mohammed. Christianity has deified Jesus, but that is not the important thing. Even if Jesus had remained the "son of man," had remained simply a prophet, as Mohammed is to the Moslems, it would still be true—and this is the significant fact—that Christianity links

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up the religious and moral consciousness with the figure of a particular man, who is regarded as the ideal of absolute perfection, and belief in whom is an essential part of a religion inconceivable without him. Judaism, and Judaism alone, depends on no such human figure. For Judaism God is the only ideal of absolute perfection, and He only must be kept always before the eye of man's inner consciousness, in order that man may "cleave to his attributes."

No man, not even the most perfect, is free from shortcomings and sins; no man can serve as an ideal for the religious sentiment, which strives after union with the source of perfection. Moses died in his sin, like any other man. He was simply God's messenger, charged with the giving of His Law; his image is not an essential part of the very fabric of the religion. Thus the Jewish teachers of a later period found nothing to shock them in the words of one who said in all simplicity: "Ezra was worthy to be the bearer of the Law of Israel, had not Moses come before him" (*Sanhedrin,* 21a). Could it enter a Christian mind, let us say, to conceive the idea that Paul was worthy to be the bearer of the "message," had not Jesus come before him? And it need scarcely be said that the individual figures of the other Prophets are not an essential part of the fabric of Judaism. Of the greatest of them—Hosea, Amos, Isaiah and others—we do not even know who or what they were; their personalities have vanished like a shadow, and only their words have been preserved and handed down from generation to generation, because they were not *their* words, but "the word of the Lord that came unto them."

This applies equally to the Messiah, whose future coming is awaited. His importance lies not in himself, but in his being *the messenger of God* for the bringing of redemption to Israel and the world. Jewish teachers pay much more attention to "the days of the Messiah," than to the Messiah himself. One of them even disbelieved altogether in a personal Messiah, and looked forward to a redemption effected by God himself without an intermediary; and he was not therefore regarded as a heretic.

This characteristic of Judaism has perhaps been the principal obstacle to its wider acceptance. It is difficult for most men to find satisfaction in an abstract ideal which offers nothing to the senses; a human figure much more readily inspires devotion. Before the triumph of Christianity the Greeks and the Romans used to accuse the Jews of having no God, because an incorporeal divinity had no meaning for them; and when the time came for the God of Israel to become also the God of the nations, they still could not accept his sway without associating with him a divine ideal in human form, thus satisfying their craving for a less remote object of adoration.

This is not the place to discuss why the Jewish people, in contrast to the rest of the world, has a preference for the abstract ideal in religion and morality. Be the reason what it may, the fact remains. So it has been these thousands of years; and so long as the Jewish people undergoes no fundamental change, it cannot be influenced on the religious side by a book like the Gospels, which finds the object of religious devotion and moral emulation not in the abstract Godhead alone, but primarily in a man born of woman. It matters not whether he be called "Son of God," "Messiah," or "Prophet": the Jews cannot accept with religious fervor, as the word of God, the utterances of a man who speaks in his own name—who says not "thus saith the Lord," but "I say unto you." This "I" is in itself sufficient to estrange Judaism from the Gospels for ever. "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy"—that is Judaism. "Ye shall be holy, because the Messiah (or the Prophet) is holy"—that is an ideal no doubt better calculated to inspire devotion and religious fervor among the Gentiles; but it will never light the flame of religion in a Jewish heart unless the last vestiges of true Judaism have first been obliterated. It was not for nothing that our ancient teachers called God "the Holy One, blessed be He." For Judaism absolute holiness exists only in the one God.

No doubt there have been now and again sects of Jewish mystics, influenced consciously or unconsciously by foreign ideas, which have diverged more or less markedly from the characteristic Jewish attitude in this matter. But the sect is merely a temporary aberration, a sort of breaking-out of some foreign element which has found its way into Jewish life at one time or another. Our history shows that in the end either the sect dis-

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appears of itself, or its adherents desert Judaism. Sects come and go, but Judaism is permanent.

This preference of the Jewish mind for the impersonal is equally evident in the Jewish conception of the aim of religion and morality. There is no need to dilate on the familiar truth that Judaism conceives its aim not as the salvation of the individual, but as the well-being and perfection of a group, of the Jewish people, and ultimately of the whole human race. That is to say, the aim is always defined in terms of a collectivity which has no defined and concrete form. In its most fruitful period, that of the Prophets and the divine revelation, Judaism had as yet no clear ideal of personal immortality or of reward and punishment after death. The religious and moral inspiration of the Prophets and their disciples was derived not from any belief of that kind, but from the conviction of their belonging to "the chosen people," which had, according to their belief, a divine call to make its national life the embodiment of the highest form of religion and morality. Even in later times, when the Babylonian exile had put an end to the free national life of the Jews, and as a result the desire for individual salvation had come to play a part in the Jewish religious consciousness, the highest aim of Judaism still remained a collective aim. For proof of the truth of this statement there is no need to look further than the prayers in the daily and festival prayer-books, of which only a minority turn on the personal needs of the individual worshiper, while the majority deal with the concerns of the nation and of the whole human race.

Which of these two aims is the higher? This question has been endlessly debated; but the truth is that in this matter we cannot establish any scale of values. A man may attain to the highest level in his religious and moral life whether he is inspired by the one aim or by the other. But individual salvation certainly makes a stronger appeal to most men, and is more likely to kindle their imagination and to inspire them to strive after moral and religious perfection. If Judaism, unlike the other religions, prefers the collective aim, this is yet another instance of the characteristically Jewish tendency to abstractness and the repudiation of the concrete form. So long as this tendency persists—so long, that is, as the Jewish people does not lose its essential character—no true Jew can be attracted by the doctrine of the Gospels, which rests wholly and solely on the pursuit of individual salvation.

THE same tendency shows itself in yet another direction, and this perhaps the most important of all: I mean in regard to the basis of morality. That Jewish morality is based on justice, and the morality of the Gospels on love, has become a platitude; but it seems to me that not all those who draw this distinction fully appreciate its significance. It is usual to treat the difference as merely one of degree, the moral scale and its basis being the same in either case. Both doctrines, it is supposed, are directed against egoism; but the Christians claim that their religion has reached a higher point in the scale, and the Jews refuse to admit this claim. Thus Christian commentators point proudly to the positive principle of the Gospels: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them" (Matt. vii. 12; Luke vi. 31), and throw it in the teeth of Judaism, which has only the negative principle of Hillel: "Do not unto your neighbour what you would not have him do unto you."

But if we look deeper, we shall find that the difference between Judaism and Christianity on this point is not one of less or more, but is a fundamental difference of view as to what is the basis of moral conduct. It was not by accident that Hillel put his principle in the negative form; it was because the positive formulation is repugnant to the Jewish conception of the basis of morality. We should have no cause for satisfaction if we found the doctrine in its positive form attributed to Hillel in some text or other; we should question the authenticity of a text which put into Hillel's mouth a pronouncement so out of harmony with the spirit of Judaism.

The root of the distinction lies here also, as I have said, in the preference of Judaism for abstract principles. The moral law of the Gospels asks the "natural man" to reverse his natural attitude towards himself and others, and to put the "other" in the place of the "self"—that is, to replace straightforward egoism by inverted egoism. For the altruism of the Gospels is neither more nor

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less than inverted egoism. Altruism and egoism alike deny the individual as such all objective moral value, and make him merely a means to a subjective end; but whereas egoism makes the "other" a means to the advantage of the "self," altruism does just the reverse. Judaism, however, gets rid of this subjective attitude entirely. Its morality is based on something abstract and objective, on *absolute justice,* which attaches moral value to the individual as such, without any distinction between the "self" and the "other."

On this theory a man's sense of justice is the supreme judge both of his own actions and of those of other men. This sense of justice must be made independent of individual relations, as though it were a separate entity; and before it all men, including the self, must be equal. All men, including the self, are under obligation to develop their lives and their faculties to the limit of their capacity, and at the same time each is under obligation to assist his neighbour's self-development, so far as he can. But just as I have no right to ruin another man's life for the sake of my own, so I have no right to ruin my own life for the sake of another's. Both of us are men, and both our lives have the same value before the throne of justice.

I KNOW no better illustration of this point of view than the following well-known *B'raita:* "Suppose two men journeying through the desert, only one of whom has a bottle of water. If both of them drink, they will both die; if one of them only drinks, he will reach safety. Ben P'tura held that it was better that both should drink and die, than that one should witness the death of his comrade. But Akiba refuted this view by citing the scriptural verse: 'and thy brother shall live with thee.' *With thee* —that is to say, thine own life comes before thy neighbour's" (*Baba M'zia,* 62a).

We do not know who Ben P'tura was; but we do know Akiba, and we may be sure that his is the authentic voice of Judaism. Ben P'tura, the altruist, does not value human life for its own sake; for him it is better that two lives should perish, where death demands no more than one, so long as the altruistic sentiment prevails. But Jewish morality looks at the question objectively. Every action that leads to loss of life is evil, even if it springs from the purest sentiments of love and compassion, and even if the victim is himself the agent. In the case before us, where it is possible to save one of the two lives, it is a moral duty to overcome the feeling of compassion, and to save what can be saved. But to save whom? Justice answers: let him who has the power save himself. . . .

But when a man came to Raba, and asked him what he should do when one in authority threatened to kill him unless he would kill another man, Raba answered him: "Be killed and kill not. Who hath told thee that thy blood is redder than his? Perhaps his blood is redder" (*P'sachim,* 25b). And Rashi, who generally gets to the root of the matter with his instinctive understanding of Judaism, correctly explains thus: "The question arises only because you know that no religious law is binding in the face of danger to life, and think that in this case also the prohibition of murder ceases to be binding because your own life is in danger. But this transgression is not like others. For do what you will, there must be a life lost. . . . How do you know that your life is more precious than his in the sight of God? Perhaps his life is more precious."

If a question like this were put to a Christian priest, we may be sure that he would begin to expatiate in glowing terms on a man's duty to sacrifice his life for another, to "bear his cross" in the footsteps of his Messiah, so that he might win the kingdom of heaven—and so forth. But the Jewish teacher weighs the question in the scales of objective justice. As a life must be lost in any case, and nobody can say which of the two lives is more precious in God's sight, the plea that the law may be broken in order to save life does not entitle you to break the sixth commandment. You must therefore be killed, and not kill. But suppose the case reversed: suppose the question to be whether I can save another from death by giving my life instead of his. Raba would reply: "Let the other be killed, and do not destroy yourself. For do what you will there must be a life lost; and how do you know that his blood is redder than yours? Perhaps yours is redder." From the standpoint of Judaism every man's blood is as red as any other's; every soul is "precious in the sight of God," be it mine or another's. Consequently no man is

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at liberty to treat his life as his own property; no man may say: "I am endangering myself; what right have others to complain of that?" (Maimonides' Code, *Laws of Murder* XI. 5). Jewish history of course records many cases of martyrdom, which will remain precious and sacred memories for all time. But these are not cases of one life given for the preservation of another similar life; they are sacrifices of human life for "the sanctification of the Name" (the religious and moral ideal) or for "the good of the community" (the religious and moral aim).

And justice demands that we rise above sentiment not only in deciding between the self and other, but also in deciding between two other persons. Forty years ago Abraham Geiger drew attention to the unique character of the Biblical injunction "Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause."* All other moral codes warn us only against favoring the rich and powerful; and the Gospels themselves favor the poor, and exaggerate their merits and the greatness that awaits them in the Kingdom of Heaven. All this is very well from the point of view of sentiment; but a morality based on justice rises above sentiment, and teaches us that, while charity is a virtue, and it is our duty to help the poor if we are able, we must not let compassion induce us to sin against justice by favoring the poor man in his suit.

ACCORDING to Herbert Spencer, the pinnacle of moral development will be reached when the altruistic sentiment becomes a natural instinct, and human beings can find no greater pleasure than in working for the good of others. Similarly Judaism, in conformity with its own principles, looks forward to the development of morality to a point at which Justice will become an instinct with good men, so that in any given situation they will be able to apply the standard of absolute justice without any long process of reflection. They will feel even the slightest deviation from justice instantaneously, and with the certainty of intuition. Personal and social considerations will not affect them in the slightest degree; their instinct will judge every action with absolute impartiality, ignoring all human relations, and making no difference between X and Y, between the self and the other, between rich and poor. Such is the moral ideal of Judaism; and because Judaism links the fulfilment of its moral aspirations with the advent of the Messiah, it endows the Messiah with this faculty of intuitive justice. The Talmud (*Sanhedrin,* 93b) says of the Messiah that "he will smell and judge," on the basis of the scriptural verse (Isaiah xi. 3): "And shall make him quick of understanding (Heb. 'smell') in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes"; and Kimhi comments on this verse as follows: "Because the sense of smell is a very delicate sense, he gives the name of smell to the most delicate perception—that is to say, the Messiah with little scrutiny will feel which men are good, and which evil."

But this development lies hidden in the bosom of a distant future. For the present the human race still lacks the instinctive sense of justice, and even the best men are apt to be so blinded by self-love or prejudice as to be unable to distinguish between good and evil. For the present, therefore, we all need some touchstone, some fundamental principle, to help us to avoid weighting the scales of justice to suit our personal ends or inclinations. Hillel has given us such a principle: "Do not unto your neighbour what you would not have him do unto you." Altruism would substitute: "Do unto your neighbour what you would like him to do unto you." In other words, take the circle of egoism, and put the "other" at its centre instead of the "self"; then you will know your whole duty. But Judaism cannot accept the altruistic principle; it cannot put the "other" in the centre of the circle, because that place belongs to justice, which knows no distinction between "self" and "other." But in the circle of egoism there is no place for justice except in a negative form. It will certainly be just not to do as egoism would not be done by; but to do as egoism would be done by—that is something without any limit, and to make it obligatory is to tilt the scales of justice to the side of the "other" and against the "self."

EVEN that "great principle of the Torah" (as Akiba called it) "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Lev. xix. 18), though in form it appears to be positive, is in reality,

* *Das Judentum und seine Geschichte* (2nd edition), p. 26.

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if rightly understood, negative. If the Torah had meant that a man must love his neighbour to the extent of sacrificing his life for him, it would have said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour more than thyself." But when you love your neighbour *as* yourself, neither more or less, your feelings are in a state of equilibrium, with no leaning either to your own side or to your neighbour's. The true meaning of the verse is :"Self-love must not be allowed to incline the scale on the side of your own advantage; love your neighbour as yourself, and then justice will necessarily decide, and you will do nothing to your neighbor that you would consider a wrong if it were done to yourself." For proof that this is the real meaning we have only to look further in the same passage of Leviticus, where we find (*ib.* 33-34): "And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not do him wrong. The stranger that sojourneth with you shall be unto you as the home-born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself." Here it is evident that to love the stranger "as thyself" means to carry out the negative precept "ye shall not do him wrong"; and if the stranger is expressly placed on the same footing as the native, this shows that in relation to the native also the intention is only that self-love must not prove a stronger motive than justice.

But in the Gospels "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" is interpreted in an altruistic sense: it means that your own life is less important than your neighbour's. Hence there is some excuse for the Christian habit of attributing this verse to the Gospels, as though it had originally appeared in the New and not in the Old Testament. It is true that the meaning which they put on the verse belongs not to the Mosaic Law, but to the Gospels.*

* John Stuart Mill wrote: "In justice to the great Hebrew lawgiver, it should always be remembered that the precept to love thy neighbour as thyself already existed in the Pentateuch; and very surprising it is to find it there." ("Three Essays on Religion," 2nd edition, p. 98). Had Mill understood the precept in its original sense, he would certainly not have been surprised to find it in the Mosaic Law. But even so logical a thinker could not emancipate himself from the influences of his education and his environment; and it did not occur to Mill that a meaning had been read into this verse which was opposed to its literal sense.

But it must be remembered that in addition to the relation of individual to individual there is another and more important moral relation—that of nation to nation. Here, also, some great principle is needed to keep within bounds that national egoism which is fraught perhaps with even greater danger to the collective progress of humanity than individual egoism. If we look at the difference between Jewish and Christian ethical teaching with this requirement in mind, we shall see at once that the altruism of the Gospels provides no sort of basis for international relations. A nation can never believe that its moral duty lies in self-abasement or in the renunciation of its rights for the benefit of other nations. On the contrary, every nation feels and knows that its moral duty is to maintain its position and to use its opportunities to create conditions in which it can develop its potentialities to the full. Hence Christian nations have not been able to regulate their relations with one another on the moral basis of their religion; national egoism has inevitably remained the sole determining force in international affairs, and patriotism, in the Bismarckian sense, has been elevated to the position of the supreme moral criterion.

But the Jewish law of justice is not confined within the narrow sphere of individual relations. In its Jewish sense the precept "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" can be carried out by a whole nation in its dealings with other nations. For this precept does not oblige a nation to sacrifice its life or its position for the benefit of other nations. It is, on the contrary, the duty of every nation, as of every individual human being, to live and to develop to the utmost limit of its powers; but at the same time it must recognise the right of other nations to fulfil the like duty without let or hindrance. Patriotism—that is, national egoism—must not induce it to disregard justice, and to seek self-fulfilment through the destruction of other nations. Hence Judaism was able thousands of years ago to enunciate the lofty ideal "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation" (Isaiah ii. 4), because that ideal is no more than the logical consequence of the idea of absolute justice, which lies at the foundation of Judaism.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

"SCREENING" LEADERS IN A DEMOCRACY

How Scientific Is Personnel Testing?

DANIEL BELL

THE weakness of democratic leadership in a mass society is a persistent theme in contemporary political discussion. A hundred and fifty years ago the discussion would have focussed on the failure of the individual citizen. Today there is a significant emphasis on the individual's social helplessness and dependency within society, and his need for strong leadership. It cannot be doubted that this is an ominous sign.

There is no question that modern society needs leaders. Whether it needs the big political leader can certainly be argued. But in all the small groupings in which society abounds—the group of men in the factory, the small unit in the army, the variety of cultural, social, and political clubs and groupings—leaders are necessary. In some of these groups leadership seems to spring up spontaneously, and when such groups fall apart, their disintegration is often explained by the lack of proper leadership. In many of them, however—the factory and the army, for example—leaders are appointed from above; and the administrator must ask himself every day what makes a good leader.

THIS question became very important during the war. While it was to be hoped that leadership qualities would emerge on the battlefield, those in positions of authority could not afford to wait. Leaders had to be found and trained long before such "trials-by-fire." In this emergency, army personnel experts fell back on the most available concept of leadership, namely, that the leader can be chosen on the basis of a cluster of specific *personality* traits, either inborn or acquired by training.

In this general concept one can distinguish, trimmed down to the practical necessities of the moment and considerably vulgarized, an idea expounded in the different theories of such diverse thinkers as Freud, Max Weber, and Gustave Le Bon; that leadership is a "magical" phenomenon whose appeal arises from a non-rational source. The testing yardstick used by army leadership, as in private enterprise varied with the specific leadership job involved for the chief effort was to specify the "vital" traits which characterized leadership in concrete situations and to identify the individuals who possessed them. But behind the various descriptions of leadership—the leader is a "magnetic personality," he has "inner drive," he is "less neurotic, less introverted" and "more dominant" and "more self-confident"—one discerns the image of a "basic leader personality." It is to

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IN "Adjusting Men to Machines," published in the January 1947 COMMENTARY—an article that continues to attract wide attention among social scientists—DANIEL BELL analyzed the growing tendency toward close cooperation and interaction between social scientists and big business. Here he turns to another aspect of the same phenomenon: the use of scientific testing methods in the choice of business executives, army officers, and others of the innumerable mass of leaders required by the large-scale organizational pattern of modern industrial society—and he poses some troublesome questions about the presumed "scientific" character of these procedures, and the dangers of their use in our democracy. Mr. Bell, instructor in social sciences at the College of the University of Chicago, has contributed to *Jewish Frontier, Politics, Partisan Review,* and various professional journals. He was born in New York in 1919 and attended the College of the City of New York and Columbia University.

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this pattern that all effective leaders were expected to conform.

The army had to choose a huge number of new officers, and the great expansion of industry swelled enormously the need for supervisory personnel. Considering the urgency and scope of this wartime problem of leadership, the initial research approach of those who tackled the question was seriously handicapped by primitive conceptual tools. The army distributed a manual during the war which reads like a ghastly parody. This manual, *Leadership for American Army Leaders* by Colonel Edward L. Munson Jr., was widely endorsed; it sold eighty thousand copies in a cloth edition and achieved even wider distribution in a paper edition issued by the *Infantry Journal*. One quotation may suffice to illustrate the quality of Colonel Munson's thought: "The leader," he states, "looks his men straight in the eye rather than shiftily and for some leaders who have the habit—usually meaningless—of not looking directly at others—this will take practice. . . ."

If such hortatory manuals produced few solid generalizations, little more was gained from the battery of tests devised by the academic psychologists who were called in to help. William O. Jenkins, a psychologist now at the University of Indiana, surveyed all the army paper and pencil tests of leadership, as well as the procedures for officer selection and promotion by ratings of superior officers, and summed up his judgment as follows: "Progress has not been made in the development of criteria of leadership behavior—no single trait or group of characteristics has been isolated which sets off the leader from members of his group . . . advances in methodology are definitely not striking."

However, advances were made in one section of the army, albeit a very specialized branch with high requirements for its leadership material. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) devised a set of so-called assessment or situational tests under the supervision of Henry A. Murray of Harvard.* Essentially, Murray rejects the idea of static, specific personality traits and bases his tests on the more sophisticated idea that leadership qualities emerge dynamically from a total character structure, which, in turn, can be evaluated most reliably by observing the subject in the field. Situations were created to reproduce as accurately as possible the situations the individual might confront in the job he was to fill; once placed within this situation, the individual was pushed to a breaking point in order to determine how adaptable and stable his personality structure really was. In the course of this type of test—essentially a test of the *total* individual "on the job"—the candidate was observed by a team of psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, etc., who pooled and checked their accumulated findings.

SITUATIONAL tests are probably as old as human groups. Adam Ferguson in his *History of Civil Society* reports that the American Indians "when a new leader was to be chosen, sent a scout forth to traverse the forests which led to the enemy's country and upon his return the candidate was desired to find the track in which he had traveled." A similar situational test had been long used by German army psychologists; Simoneit, the arbiter of German military psychology, had decided as far back as 1933 that "isolated measures of single abilities are useless."* But German research was hindered by preconceived racial theories and achieved results of very doubtful value. The British, though, had for many years picked their officers by putting small groups through situational tests, which were then assessed by a psychological board. Murray adapted his tests from the British model.

The OSS procedure took three and a half days, during which time the candidate was put through thirty-five "life situation" tests. Each man was listed on a Hollerith punch card, with eleven items to be rated: motivation, energy and initiative, effective intelligence, emotional stability, social relations, leadership, physical ability, security, observation and reporting, propaganda skills, integrity. (The Hollerith punch card, used by the army as well as many large firms, neatly symbolizes the increasing regulation of life. One's traits are marked out on a rectangular card and the number of men with any desired combination of traits can be

* The OSS experiences have recently been published by Dr. Murray in a volume entitled *The Assessment of Men* (Rinehart, $6.50).

* A comprehensive section on German researches into leadership can be found in *German Psychological Warfare*, edited by Ladislas Farago and Lewis Gittler. (Committee for National Morale, 1942.)

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automatically selected by putting the cards through a machine.)

In one situation the group might be told that it was escaping across a field enclosed by an electrically-charged fence; no leader was appointed, and the men were then observed to see who took the initiative. Or a man was appointed the leader of a platoon, supplied with completely inadequate equipment, and ordered to move a ten-pound rock across a stream within a stated time limit. In addition, his helpers, without his knowledge, were ordered to sabotage the work or engage in horseplay during tense moments. In all these tests, the chief effort was to bring intense pressure to bear on the candidate and to procure a kind of slow-motion picture of his psychological responses.

Various projective devices were also employed, especially the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) which Murray had invented in 1937. In this test a man is asked to interpret a series of pictures; his responses often reveal many of his unconscious tendencies and identifications. Another test used—a sentence completion test—consisted of one hundred significant sentences calculated to elicit various unconscious drives in the answers given by the candidates.

In the final stage of the OSS project, a clinical conference made the final assessment of each man, utilizing all the material accumulated. The Murray-OSS tests are probably the most comprehensive yet devised, short of a course of psychoanalysis, for probing into a personality. The limitations of these tests are apparent: they seek only to pick out men for highly specific tasks, and are less useful in providing an understanding of the nature of leadership and the conditions from which it emerges. But their practical usefulness has been so convincingly demonstrated that the State Department has been reported considering them as a basic tool in the selection of top personel.

Since the tendency now is to define leadership ability not in terms of specific traits but in personality constellation, there has been an increasing use of such projective tests as the Rorschach and the Thematic Apperception tests, which are designed to reveal underlying personality structures. William E. Henry of the University of Chicago, a psychologist specializing in TAT, has recently completed a study of executives in a large non-manufacturing corporation. The corporation had ordered the study to discover the personality pattern of a successful executive, taking as a starting point for research the tested quality of their own executives. Henry was able through the use of TAT to create an inventory of the traits to be expected in successful executives. As a result, the corporation's personnel department will probably now use Rorschachs and TAT's in choosing executive personnel.

The qualities of leadership discovered by Henry read suspiciously like all the qualities defined in the executive's manuals, though he does have a more reliable instrument for uncovering them. The good executive "does not see the authority figures in his environment as destructive or prohibiting forces." He has a "firm, well-developed self-identity, knows what he wants and has a well-developed technique for getting it." He has a strong reality orientation. He regards his subordinates "in an essentially detached and impersonal way, seeing them as 'doers of work.'" He has broken his ties with his mother, although he has a positive, emulative tie with the father. "Those men who still feel a strong emotional tie to the mother have systematically had difficulty in the business situation. This residual emotional tie seems contradictory to the necessary attitudes of activity, progress, and channelized aggression." The father image provides the initiative and competitive pattern which assures striving and success.*

Based on tests such as these, an organization called Social Research, Inc., headed by Burleigh Gardner, is now telling such corporations as Sears Roebuck, General Mills, Container Corporation, and others how to pick executives.

There are pitfalls in this kind of research. These tests take a stereotype and tend to reinforce it, thus making these stereotyped qualities a goal for those who want the rewards held out for possessing them. The image people have of a leader too often pre-figures the kind of person they look for to respect and follow. The typical American leader is, by legend, tall, handsome, blond, Anglo-Saxon, carefree—and thus army officers on OCS boards, personnel officers hiring from colleges, etc., look for this type.

In any group which has a stereotype-

* These quotations and analyses were taken from an unpublished report, and represent Henry's conclusions, not his valuations, based on what the TAT showed the successful executive pattern to be.

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image of a leader, particular individuals in the group will almost inevitably mold themselves to that stereotype in order to assume authority. The situation produces what Milton Singer has called the "self-confirming hypothesis." This is what a leader is, the tests proclaim, individuals mold themselves in that fashion—and finally, the test discovers and "proves" that these men are leaders. Far from providing scientific tests of leadership capacity, may they not merely place "scientific" authority behind pre-scientific, traditional leadership images?

Inevitably, if such specifications for leadership are allowed to stand, they will bolster the business and industrial structure in its least progressive aspects, becoming part of the machinery of discrimination and segregation, and fostering anti-democratic tendencies. In contrast, one must remember that recent wartime industrial experience, stimulated especially by FEPC, has shown that the democratic procedure of developing talent and initiative out of the cooperation of a diversity of "types" usually results in an even higher level of efficiency.

Leadership as a Social Product

AGAINST the whole approach that leadership is something "inborn" and to be discovered—and this is typical of the army and the administrator's approach—stands the idea that leadership is something specific to a given social purpose and can be trained. Moreover, this newer conception does not see leadership as an authority pattern cut along a single style. Rather, leadership is seen as a complex social function in which different types of leadership roles emerge as responses to different types of group needs.

The basic tendency in this phase of research is to study leadership not in terms of a series of traits or attributes—such as decisiveness, intelligence, courage, etc.—but in *functional* terms, as the product of a complex give-and-take among group members. In these terms a leader is not a person marked by destiny or a man with a distinguishable stamp, but one who, because of his own personality structure, may fit the needs of a particular group and emerge as a leader in that situation. A person may be a leader in one situation and play absolutely no role in another. This is true not only sociologically, but psychologically as well.

Sociologically, it is fairly obvious, viewing the growth of American industry, that business leaders today bear little resemblance to the buccaneers and tycoons of fifty years ago. Even the words are no longer applicable. The plutocrat of fifty years ago was a forthright, hard-driving individualist, an entrepreneur whose success was tied quite directly to his own personality. The modern industrial executive is essentially an administrator, his background often law or accounting, his enterprise a complex organization based on an elaborate formal status system. Within that system, the "rugged individualist" has little place.

In the area of inter-personal relations, one of the solid pieces of research is the study by Helen Hall Jennings, *Leadership and Isolation* (Longmans, Green, 1943). Mrs. Jennings, as associate of the psychiatrist Jacob Moreno, was one of the pioneers in developing the sociometric test. This study traces patterns of attraction and repulsion in organized groups by permitting spontaneous choices and thus locating leadership patterns in the group.

The study was conducted at a state home for delinquent girls in New York, directed by Dr. Moreno. After the girls got to know one another, they were allowed to choose those with whom they would like to share a room, eat, work, etc. From the patterning of choices there emerged a group of "under-chosen" or isolates and a group of "over-chosen" or leaders. This last group could then be studied more intensively. Contrary to the popular expectation that leaders will resemble each other, this study showed that there were marked differences among them.

The four girls chosen for leadership seemed to fulfill particular functions for those who chose them. Girl 1 was sweet and warm, always willing to help, yet made no direct efforts to take the initiative. Girl 2 was logical and direct, let the others talk or seek the initiative in the group situation, but acted as a consultant because of her cleverness in handling their problems. Girl 3 played the role of personal counselor; she was able to establish rapport quickly through tact and subtlety and give the girls a sense of being understood. Girl 4 was vivacious and forthright, able to elicit immediate group response and activate her followers through her personal *élan*.

Thus we have a series of different roles played by the different girls, each serving as catalysts for the varying personality needs of the group. Within the community there existed such a range of personality types that no one person could possibly win exclusive command

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over the others. The only characteristic common to the leaders seemed to be a marked degree of self-control or emotional maturity, which gave the others a sense of strength and security. Each leader appeared able to control her own moods, at least to the extent of not inflicting feelings of depression and anxiety on the others.

ANOTHER important attempt to identify the different social roles that leadership patterns take has been made in a long and highly suggestive paper by Fritz Redl ("Group Emotions and Leadership," *Psychiatry*, 1942, No. 4). Redl's starting point is Freud's analysis of the function of the leader in a group situation.

For Freud (in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*), the phenomenon of "hypnotism" is the model of all authority. The follower submits to the leader because he hopes to recapture his dependence on the parent, who once supplied the all-sufficing love and protection during his earliest years. Through the mechanism of *identification*, the psychological bond is cemented; the image of another person is put in the place of the individual's own ego. Fearful of his capacity to make judgments and afraid to act on the basis of his own decisions, filled with anxiety and helplessness, the individual takes over into his own personality the values, habits, and even gestures of someone who seems stronger or who seems to supply the ideal elements he lacks in himself.

But Freud's analysis, Redl finds, is too simple, although fundamental for a description of the crucially important process of identification. For the word "leader" Redl would substitute "central person," a more than semantic distinction. The "central person" is not always a leader in terms of that stereotype which sees him as the decisive man of action; he is a catalyst whose actions congeal disparate elements into a unified group. Nor is there *a* leader and *a* group, but rather a variety of leader roles derived from varying social situations and producing many different kinds of groups.

Redl indicates ten different kinds of "central person" who may provide centers of identification for persons of different character needs One central person, for example, is the "patriarchal sovereign." The basis of his authority is order and discipline; his appeal is to the sense of duty instilled in the earliest years. Another is the "leader." The basis of his authority is his strong sympathy with the emotional drives of those subordinate to him, and his appeal is to the love emotion. A third is the "tyrant," who operates through compulsive discipline. In all three cases identification is present; the subjects want to *be like* the central person.

An important type is the "seducer." A number of men may form a potential group on the basis of some common desire, yet cannot act because of a conflict between their desire and some moral code (e.g., desire to commit a lynching and the sense of guilt attending it). In this situation, someone *initiates* the act and assumes the burden of guilt. This phenomenon Redl describes as "exculpation magic through the initiatory act," a mechanism which provides an excuse to avoid guilt and anxiety. The excuse runs quite simply: "He did it first."

Redl's view strikes out against the psychological mysticism of leadership. Not the "strong man" is the successful leader, but the flexible one, the individual who can play a variety of social roles and thus satisfy many different types of groups.

The Climates of Leadership

IF, AS the foregoing studies indicate, leadership can only be understood as a response to diverse social needs, then the real problem is: leadership for what? Most researches have tended to take the problem in its traditional terms, and leadership is traditionally seen in the model of authority. Can we explore alternative social arrangements and observe their effects upon personality?

The only attempt to test experimentally the results produced under different leadership situations is in the work of the late Kurt Lewin and his associates. The Lewin group has produced a voluminous number of reports and studies. It is only now, nearly nine years after the first experiments were conducted, that Lewin's data is being integrated into general psychological schemes and his conclusions tested in specific action situations.

The first major problem consisted of setting up three different "atmospheres" for four groups of boys' clubs; one setting was "authoritarian," the second "democratic," and the third "laissez-faire." In the first situation the leader, aloof from the group, gave all the orders and work proceeded one step at a time. In the second, the leader discussed with the boys what projects they wanted to do, and steps were planned out for many sessions at one sitting. In the third, the leader stayed in the background, let the

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boys do what they wanted to, and gave advice only on request.*

Four kinds of group reaction emerged. Two of these were within the authoritarian climate, where one club's reaction was of great submissiveness, strong dependence on the leader, relatively low levels of frustration, and little capacity for initiating action; whereas the other authoritarian club had an aggressive reaction accompanied by considerable frustration and some degree of aggression channelized toward the authoritarian leader. On the other hand, the democratic climate created a relative independence of the leader; and the atmosphere of laissez-faire promoted general indecision.

Significant differences among the groups arose out of "work involvement" and "frustration" experiments. In the former, it was found that the groups in the two authoritarian climates spent a higher percentage of time in work activity than the democratic and laissez-faire groups—but only when the leader was present. The greatest amount of work was in the submissive autocracy, while the least took place in the laissez-faire group. When the leaders left the rooms, the percentage of time spent in activity fell in the aggressive group from the normal figure of fifty-five per cent to fifteen per cent; in the submissive group, activity time fell from seventy-five per cent to twenty-five per cent; in the democratic group, from fifty to forty-eight per cent; while in the laissez-faire group it *rose* from thirty-five to fifty per cent. Thus, the loss of the leader had little effect in the democratic atmosphere; activity rose in the laissez-faire atmosphere, apparently because one of the boys was then able to exert his own influence and take the initiative.

In the "frustration experiment," a stranger entered the club room after the leader had left, and made derogatory comments about the club's work. Members of the submissive authoritarian group tended to accept the criticism individually, internalize it, and, in one or two cases, blow off steam by aggressive behavior toward a club meeting in an adjacent room. In the aggressive authoritarian group, the frustration was mostly channeled toward a neighboring club. In the democratic group, there was a quicker tendency to unite against the source of frustration, followed by a slight rise in tension among the club members themselves, and finally aggression against inanimate objects (e.g., striking wood with hammer or chisel), the last development accompanied by a striking rise in in-group friendliness. "It was particularly interesting to discover that the clubs under democratic leaders resisted scapegoating as a channel against aggressive response." Thus: the aggressive group was more ready to express its frustration in inter-club war; the submissive group to internalize the aggression; the democratic and laissez-faire groups to react against the real source of the frustration.

In another experiment, it was found that when authoritarian groups were brought into a freer atmosphere there was a great tendency to horseplay, indicating a need to blow off steam; these actions tended to disappear as the meetings continued. Again, a club which had passively accepted an authoritarian leader in the beginning of its history was much more frustrated and restive under a second authoritarian leader after it had experienced a democratic leader.

It must be kept in mind that these researches were concerned primarily with democratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire "atmospheres" rather than with groups, principally because "atmospheres" could be manipulated more freely. Whether these results would hold for "spontaneous groups" which are authoritarian, democratic, or laissez-faire in character is still under question. Furthermore, in all three phases of the Lewin-Lippitt experiments, the leaders were *imposed*. Yet in a situation where boys might *voluntarily* accept an authoritarian leader who was capable of developing enthusiasm, it is conceivable that the resultant solidarity might match that of the democratic groups. Also, the contention that the boys in authoritarian groups give up something which they do not give up in the democratic groups is open to qualification: it depends, if Redl's conclusions are correct, on what type of authoritarian leader pattern exists and also what the leader gives in return. Lippitt's own observations that most youth groups are quite happy under a benevolent autocracy and find it difficult to change

* General accounts of these experiments are carried in chapters by Ronald Lippitt, the field director of the studies, in the following works: *Readings in Social Psychology*, ed. by Newcomb and Hartley (Holt, 1947); *Civilian Morale*, Goodwin Watson (Houghton, Mifflin, 1942); *Child Development and Behavior*, Barker, Kounin, and Wright (McGraw-Hill, 1943). More technical reports are carried in several academic journal articles and in monographs published by the State University of Iowa, where the researches were conducted.

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to the democratic atmosphere, and indeed often require gradual education into its ways, is material for reflection.

If the Lewin-Lippitt data is valid, it suggests that people can be educated in a non-manipulative way and that leaders can be "trained" first by establishing a democratic atmosphere in which self-reliance is encouraged, and then through those common work patterns which create a sense of purpose. But this poses the real social problem more acutely: that is, does not the tendency of much present-day social science, which is to fit people into a niche in a previously determined bureaucratic and hierarchical structure, violate the values of both free scientific inquiry and democracy? The researches and experiments of the Lewin group suggest that they need not. (A series of attempts actually to train leaders on the basis of their findings has been started by the Lewin group.)

One basic generalization gained from the "social climates" study was that better leadership and better results could be obtained if the group leader would stress participation and thereby create a democratic atmosphere.* The Lewin group, now located at Massachusetts Institute of Technology as the Research Center for Group Dynamics, has sought to apply these principles of democratic group participation in the training of supervisors in industry and group leaders in social work. Their most important project, among a number started, is the current effort to interest industrial leaders in a new type of foreman and supervisory training. The philosophy and techniques of this approach are summarized in a booklet "Supervisory Training for Group Leadership," by Leland P. Bradford and Ronald Lippitt (Publication No. 4, MIT Research Center in Group Dynamics).

Again the key word is participation. In an autocratic work atmosphere the workers' "basic need for belongingness" is blocked. "The majority of books and articles on supervision and group leadership . . . have turned the attention of the supervisor only toward what he does and not toward the effects of his actions on what the group does. This has resulted in an overemphasis upon dominance and submission whereas the basis of any truly efficient group is joint responsibility, participation, and recognition. . . . The sharp distinction between the leader and the led must gradually disappear. . . ."

Lippitt has also made clever use of Moreno's "sociodrama" technique, in which a problem is presented to the group and the participants act out in impromptu fashion a variety of roles. In a situation reported by Lippitt in *Sociatry* (June 1947) a group of supervisors was given the problem of a laggard file clerk. The first impulse of the supervisors was to make the clerk "toe the mark," yet in acting it out they finally came around to the position that perhaps the clerk "didn't know the importance of the work." The discussion could then move on to the problem of creating rapport between the clerk and his supervisor.

Offhand, every democratic-minded person would certainly regard such experiments in industry as praiseworthy. The notion that democracy implies participation and that a democratic leader seeks to instill understanding rather than obedience is basic to democratic political theory and the history of democracy.

But participation as a goal in its own terms is meaningless. The fascist and Communist systems also emphasize participation. In the 1930's and even today the main attraction of the Soviet system for many liberals has been the sense of "belongingness" it created.

Ernest Kris and Nathan Leites, in "Trends in Twentieth Century Propaganda" (*Psychoanalysis and the Social Sciences*, ed. G. Róheim), have analyzed the different manner in which participation was stressed in democratic and totalitarian leadership. In German wartime propaganda the emphasis was on participation but the setting was always the visible leader exhorting the masses. Democratic propaganda, less emotional and less moralistic, sought to provide factual insight. Thus, in Churchill's speeches during the dark days of Spring 1940, "Everyone could understand how his own behavior was related to the total situation and how this situation was structured. . . . Unknown danger was transformed into a danger known in kind and extent. . . ."

* Two other studies, which I can mention only briefly, serve to confirm the importance of group participation in the making of effective decisions. One study, reported by Alex Bavelas in "Morale and the Training of Leaders" (*Civilian Morale*, ed. Goodwin Watson) was a most significant experiment in retraining WPA youth-group leaders. The other study, made by Lewin and Bavelas and reported in "Group Decision and Social Change," (*Readings in Social Psychology*, ed. Newcomb and Hartley), was an experiment in influencing eating habits. Again it was found that *participation* was the key to success.

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Democratic propaganda, facing the threat of defeat, could call for meaningful resistance because the people had been consistently apprized of the dangers. Nazi propaganda, in defeat, could only address future generations. With the democratic leader, understanding of the situation is the precondition for moral participation. The totalitarian leader simply offers himself as an object that replaces the super-ego (conscience) functions in the individual.

Thus our inquiry inevitably returns to the problem of bureaucratization. How, within the framework of impersonality which is modern society, can we create areas of genuine spontaneity in which group participation can be satisfactorily obtained. For some sociologists, this is, naively, a problem merely of communication: "the lines upward must be kept as free and direct as the lines downward." But the problem of bureaucratization can also be considered within the context of *power*, and, within that area, as a *conflict of interests*. These interests are not only psychological, involving the most crucial trends in human behavior and motivation—for instance, the whole deeply personal issue of dominance or submission; they are also sociological—and political and economic — insofar as they are most intimately intertwined with the key problem of how our society intends to distribute the rewards and privileges at its disposal.

It is rather curious that even among such democratically-motivated psychologists as Lippitt and Bradford there is no mention of the role of the trade union movement. A trade union exists in many areas, after all, largely because the need for belongingness and solidarity which the workers feel can only be fulfilled genuinely and independently *outside* the power structure of the factory hierarchy. And in the crucial morale test it is those unions which satisfy this need that are successful.

In another way the authors indicate that they are operating in a social vacuum. Almost all their generalizations are defined under terms of optimum employment and need for higher production. Of what meaning is their analysis, and of what value the understanding of the factory sociology, during a period of deflation, firings, restriction of output, and so on?

Ultimately, the problem of leadership is shaped by the fact that while we live in a society of political democracy, almost all basic social patterns are authoritarian and tend to instill feelings of helplessness and dependence. We begin as dependent beings, in the family situation. The nature of middle-class morality drives parents to impose the basic patterns of conformity which will subsequently be demanded elsewhere. Our schools also, despite the long years of effort toward progressive education, still operate largely on authoritarian models. Our factories, hierarchical in structure, are, for all the talk of human relations programs, still places where certain men exercise arbitrary authority over others.

Within this inescapable context, will not participation appear as only another form of support for precisely those authoritarian economic and industrial structures which well-intentioned sociologists and psychologists wish to eliminate?

It is on this note of doubt that our survey must close. The overwhelming difficulties that confront the democratically-minded researchers working in this field cannot serve as excuse or pretext for ignoring the basic contradiction between their democratic goals and the authoritarian purposes which their experiments are most often made to serve. Possibly the forthright recognition of this contradiction will enable them to formulate a different and broader framework for their future work.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

For Free Migration

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Josephine Ripley's excellent article on the displaced persons in the January COMMENTARY ("The Climate Shifts on Immigration") prompts the thought that civic bodies have now the chance to go beyond simple endorsement of the Stratton bill, which limits itself to the admission into the United States of 400,000 DPs, a figure representing that part of immigration quotas unused during the war. For immediate political reasons affecting DP entry, it may be necessary to treat the quota system as sacrosanct, but the problem of international migration only begins with the DPs. The 19th century seems to have understood what the 20th does not: that people should have the right to move around the world as they want. That twenty-four-year-old monstrosity, the United States Immigration Law, is perhaps the biggest concrete obstacle to this movement. In effect, it discriminates in favor of persons who do not want to come to the United States. Why not launch a direct attack upon it?

It is, of course, unreasonable to expect a complete turn around of public thinking on immigration—note Miss Ripley's evidence on the prevalence of xenophobia—but it is not unreasonable, I believe, to start an attempt at some sort of partial turn: note Miss Ripley's listing of the many civic groups that endorse the Stratton bill. To these already interested groups it may now be wise to point out the fact that immigration controls are an inherent part of the paraphernalia of statism, and that freer immigration is peculiarly central to a free economy and a peaceful world, providing, as it does, a natural and highly sensitive mechanism for shifting people from underdeveloped or overpopulated areas to places where their labor can be of greatest value. It can be demonstrated that the economic growth of the United States required the entry of growing numbers of immigrants; that immigration closely followed the business cycle, increasing the country's rate of growth during times of boom and actually decreasing it during times of depression; and that the real end of the American frontier of opportunity and growth was bound up with the clamping on of immigration controls.

Immigrants—when they existed in any numbers—even served as effective ambassadors of Americanism to the people back home; indeed, the United States may have been more intimately known in Europe from their letters during the 19th century than it is today from the formal reports of news agencies. In any case, it has recently proved advisable to undertake a campaign to do artificially what was once done naturally: personal letter writing to convince people in Europe that the United States really isn't imperialistic.

Miss Ripley observes that the business community, once the champion of immigration, has proved lethargic even in approving the Stratton bill. I am inclined to feel that this lethargy could to some degree be overcome if there could be established pilot colonial projects in other parts of the world in which business could not only observe the benefits of the movements of people but also participate profitably in those movements. Nowadays, when a problem is not an opportunity but just a problem, most colonial projects are grandiose schemes for anticipating everything—and then losing money. Public or private, the organization in charge tries to plan everything in minute detail. There is seldom opportunity for the colony to find its own channels of growth. Usually the colonists are bound to agriculture, an occupation unattractive to many, and are subject to stifling regulations. The economic pessimism of post-war-and-depression days has made colonizing seem simply a worthy means of caring for some of the world's unfortunates.

In the days when colonizing was more successful it was not a charity; it was a way of making money. The organizers did not undertake to provide everything that the colonists required. Companies bought up land, made such minor improvements on it as proved necessary to attract buyers, and left to other

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entrepreneurs the building of houses, roads, and community facilities. There are still parts of the world in which it would be possible to buy land, improve it by spraying the area with DDT and by building roads or small railroads, and then throw it open to purchasers, leaving to the business acumen of others the further development of the area, and thus sharing both risk and profit.

If a company set up for such an undertaking were wise in its own interests, it could avoid not only the private exploitation too often practiced upon colonists in the past, but also the public restrictions visited upon them now. Colonial projects should be open to anybody from anywhere in the world; they can succeed financially only if the colonists do what they are fitted to do and what they want to do. In other words, farmers from China or India and machine workers from Poland and physicians from Czechoslovakia ought to have the right freely to come and freely go, and their entry should be encouraged by long-term amortizing mortgages on land, free home sites, and easy house construction financing. Capital could be encouraged by cheap factory and mining sites. At present there is little encouragement, little freedom, and no profit.

There are, certainly, heavy obstacles to the success of such projects. Most governments want to hand-pick their immigrants and most of them want to insulate their people from Asiatics, who are good farmers and who want to move. This obstacle could probably be overcome, at least in such not-unlikely places as the highlands of America or the hills of New Guinea, by a company that backs up talk with money. A second obstacle would be the pessimism of the learned, who would say it can't be done. Ever since World War I and the depression, scholars have tended to believe that the world is mature to the point of senescence, and that people and capital should stay within their national boundaries, emerging only to care for pressing problems on a planned charitable basis. A third obstacle would be the pessimism of the capitalists, who no longer have a fancy for the more imaginative sort of foreign risks.

The obstacles to colonization elsewhere are the same in nature as the obstacles to immigration to the United States: they grow out of psychological prejudices. What is needed is some of the enthusiasm that seeks to create opportunity rather than to profit on an opportunity that already exists, enthusiasm of the sort that built Australia, New Zealand, and North and South America. What is needed, I believe, is a group of enthusiasts for world immigration.

HERRYMON MAURER

Chappaqua, New York

A Point of Law

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I suppose I am too young—I am ten years old—to be interested in the articles in your magazine, but I do like to read your poems.

In your March issue, I read "Tailor Boys" and I noticed something wrong. I know that Jews never put on phylacteries on Sabbath morning, so they wouldn't be carrying them to the synagogue. The sort of pious Jews that the poet talks about would not carry anything on the Sabbath anyway.

FREYDA KRAUS

Chicago, Illinois

Mr. Jacob Sloan, who translated the poem, states: the word in the original poem is *tfilin zek*, and refers to the bags in which both phylacteries and prayer-shawls were either left in the synagogue on the preceding evening or, in the smaller town where this was not feasible, were carried to prayer.

Mr. Kalman Heisler, the author, states: "In my town, the bags were always referred to as 'phylactery bags' even when used solely for the carrying of the prayer-shawl on the Sabbath. There are many possible explanations for this local peculiarity, but I can vouch for its authenticity as a fact."

Rabbi Louis Finkelstein of the Jewish Theological Seminary, when called upon to moderate, said: "The phylactery bag was a separate and smaller bag contained within the larger bag for the prayer-shawl. While the bag containing the prayer-shawl may have been carried, in certain places, on the Sabbath, the phylactery bag would certainly have been left at home. However, local and regional peculiarities of nomenclature always exist and, as in this case, give rise to confusion. It is forbidden, generally speaking, to carry anything out of the house or in the streets on the Sabbath day. However, in various European cities, the Jewish community sets up an *erub*, which, from the point of view of Jewish ritual, turns the whole city into a single household, and under those circumstances, it is, of course, permitted to carry things on the Sabbath. An *erub* is a wall or fence, or even a wire or rope, which serves as an enclosure for a locality marking it off from the world at large."—ED.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Image of the Negro

ALBERT SEARS. By MILLEN BRAND. New York, Simon and Schuster, 1947. 273 pp. $2.75.

KINGSBLOOD ROYAL. By SINCLAIR LEWIS. New York, Random House, 1947. 348 pp. $3.00.

THE PATH OF THUNDER. By PETER ABRAHAMS. New York, Harper, 1948. 278 pp. $2.75.

GOD IS FOR WHITE FOLKS. By WILL THOMAS. New York, Creative Age, 1947. 305 pp. $3.00.

QUALITY. By CID RICKETTS SUMNER. New York, Bobbs-Merrill, 1947. 278 pp. $2.75. (Bantam Reprint, 1947. $.25.)

Reviewed by JAMES BALDWIN

PERHAPS the measure of the really stupendous inadequacy of the five novels under consideration here is the fact that, of them all, the most impressive and the most valid is Millen Brand's quite unremarkable *Albert Sears*. Reading these novels I was struck by an almost paralyzing desperation: What could one possibly say about them? What, in these days, is a novel? If it is conceded that *Kingsblood Royal* is a new low, even for the American liberal middlebrow, what then is one to say about *Albert Sears*, a resolutely undistinguished novel which, by virtue of its present company, seems graceful and perceptive and quite thoroughly worthwhile? The line between what might be called the personal or creative intellectual and that vast culture of the masses with which we are, willy-nilly, involved, is a precarious one: on the one hand there is corruption and on the other a remote vista closely resembling No Man's Land.

Granting the initial debasement of literary standards, the arrival of the protest novel was inevitable. The question forever posed by the existence of the protest novel—a kind of writing becoming nearly as formalized as those delicate vignettes written for the women's magazines—is whether or not its power as a corrective social force is sufficient to override its deficiencies as literature. It is better, it is said, to have a *Kingsblood Royal* or a *Gentleman's Agreement*, shoddy as they are, than nothing at all; it is an improvement over the unrealistic, hush-hush attitude of preceding generations. At least, the existence of these novels keeps urgent social questions in the public mind; no one can hide from them.

But this attractive and optimistic analysis poses questions of its own: How closely do these novels reflect the social questions which —since, admittedly, they are not, by and large, good novels—are their sole reason for being? With what reality are they concerned, how is it probed, how translated, exactly what message is being brought to this amorphous public mind? Finally: is the "great work" these novels are presumably doing in the world quite worth the torture they are to read?

ALBERT SEARS comes under the heading of a protest novel somewhat arbitrarily. Much, but not all, of the story is concerned with the efforts of a Negro family to move into a white neighborhood. The book differs from its fellows in that, if the struggle is recounted without distinction or power, it is also relatively free of the condescension and the infantile bitterness which forms the pulpy core of the other novels here. Mr. Brand is not really at ease when writing about the national problem, but one almost admires his occasional honest stiffness when one considers what nightmares of tolerance he might have evoked instead. On the basis of the work being considered, he is the only man here entitled to be called a novelist at all; and this is not because his novel indicates any very impressive talent or because of any startling insights, but merely because there is at work in Mr. Brand a more sensitive intelligence and a modest honesty and the ability to write a sentence. His story, as a matter of

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fact, is concerned not so much with Negroes as with the relationship between an illegitimate adolescent and his strong-willed father; on this level it is more controlled but no more illuminating than most similar studies produced in our time; and on this level it is not worth much discussion. The incident of the Manhurst family, which adds a kind of violent strength, also tears what there is of the novel to pieces, since it never quite fits in and it diverts rather than broadens our sympathy. To be sure, this is not so much Mr. Brand's defection as it is the inherited response of our generation, which is inclined to see in every Negro a furious call to arms.

Here, nevertheless, Mr. Brand's novel has a valuable element, one which might one day be explored with some profit: his protagonist, the young Albert, battles on the side of the Negroes with no very clear aim and only because he is guilt-ridden and anchorless, rejected from that white society in which he was born and with which he struggles to get into step. But his acceptance of the Manhursts is a desperate, transient act; it is neither noble nor liberal, it is not "American." His friendship with the Negro family may continue or it may not; in any case, both the battle and the identification have been personal. The Manhursts do not represent a problem to him, their blackness or whiteness is not his concern. They are human beings to whom he has responded, who have afforded him a shelter for a time. (Throughout the book the Manhursts never attain the status of a "problem"; they are a nuisance—niggers who are bringing property values down—and they are opposed in the usual ugly, shocking ways. But at the end of the book they are still there; their neighbors are no better for the experience but, having tried and failed, they are resigned and have ceased to hurl brickbats; instead they are looking about for other places to live.)

With *Kingsblood Royal* we descend abruptly into a kind of lugubrious, sentimental nightmare. This is an ill-tempered, tasteless, condescending novel, which, despite the great fame of its author, might be dismissed as utterly without significance if it were not for the fact that three other novels, written by people closer to the scene—two Negroes and a Southern white woman—differ from it only in that they are not quite so bald. These novels—*The Path of Thunder, God Is For White Folks,* and *Quality*—have a great deal in common. They are not, in the first place, so much concerned with Negroes as they are with sex between the races and the doomed offspring thereof. (Negroes are, as a matter of fact, considered with a somewhat uneasy and disapproving affection.) The protagonists are manifestly superior, and are monotonously hounded because of their dark blood, which in these novels has much the same relevance as some mysterious, rather nasty, and implacable disease. In all except one of these novels, the protagonists are as fair as daylight: Neil Kingsblood "discovers" that he has Negro blood and must learn to face it; in *Quality,* the heroine, who has been "passing" in the North, comes home to the South and her illiterate granny to live among and learn to love her people; in *The Path of Thunder,* the locale of which is South Africa, Lanny, the hero, is quite dark, but turns out, after all, to be the son of the town's ruling white man; and in *God Is For White Folks,* Beau, the illegitimate son of a Southern plantation owner, eventually comes home to his dying father's bosom, bringing a Negro bride as irreproachably fair as himself to reign in the ancestral halls.

This approaches pure fantasy, an element familiar in fiction but never allied formally with sociology. Here we can make two charitable assumptions: one, that, after all, these things *do* happen; two, that the tasteless prose and the antique plots will present no obstacles to the public mind and are, perhaps, the safest vehicles for a humane and honest rage. But, probing more deeply, one finds that these novels are not essentially any more "advanced" than *The Birth of a Nation;* even the humane rage comes closer to approximating a kind of uncontrollable hysteria. These novels utilize—compulsively—a rather shabby trick: Treat Negroes as human beings, the novelists cry; but this contains a clause: there *are* some Negroes you ought to admire; and finally: many of them, most of the best of them, are not much darker than you are. This might be forgivable, were there not at the same time an exploitation of the more familiar myth which these novels are loudly engaged in tearing down.

Thus, when the heroine of *Quality* goes home—to a landscape not notably different from that made familiar by Margaret Mitchell—her greatest humiliation comes when she is treated in exactly the same manner as a dark, gin-drinking, razor-toting hussy—concerning

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whom the author, through the heroine's eyes, comments: "In a way [her hysteria] compensated for her ignorance, her low standing in the social scale. Maybe the same thing was true of the great mass of the colored people, simple, ignorant, yet uninhibited in their emotional expression." It is the heroine, with her great admixture of white blood, who will lead her people from these low grounds. Similarly, when Neil Kingsblood discovers his ancestry, his wife waits apprehensively for the signs—expecting him to turn into a "shambling, foolish" darky. But this does not happen and she sticks to him; after all, he has not really changed; he is as white as ever; he has merely become a crusader for a downtrodden people.

THE really remarkable plots, counter-plots, and sub-plots that make these novels as impossible to remember as they are difficult to read, again betray an essential desperation. The plots are all concerned with the sexual aggressions of whites against blacks; these constitute, before the books begin, the essential *a priori* dilemma; they operate to burden every encounter within the novel proper with a clandestine, historic significance; the atmosphere inside which these people move is made heavy with unfulfilled desire. The considerable problem this presents to the American psyche is partially solved by keeping the protagonists as light as possible or, at any rate, making it abundantly clear that the Negro under discussion is not subject to the same passions and cannot therefore be bound by the same laws as saddle other Negroes. These novels are, really, exceedingly timorous studies of transgression, and they all have two sets of transgressors: the ancestors, who are a Negro woman and a white man; and the protagonists, who, in all cases but one, are a Negro man and a white woman. The exception is *Quality,* whose heroine forsakes her white would-be lover and is last seen making plans for a Negro hospital with a quite satisfyingly dark young doctor. In *Kingsblood Royal* the sting of transgression is removed by the complete innocence of the transgressor and the impossibility of taking his one-thirty-second Negro-ness seriously. *God Is For White Folks* ends in quite an impressive display of abrupt insanity, murders, and sudden deaths in which all of the elderly transgressors are destroyed and the lover and his lass, produced, incontrovertibly, by sin, are redeemed through blood and allowed to enter the manse. In *The Path of Thunder,* Lanny, despite his father's blood, is dark, and Sarie is fair, and they are shot to death in an old cabin; it is Lanny's father, incidentally, who shoots them.

But the quarrel here is not with the violent incident; or the violent death; or the difficulty of union between black and white. The reports of violence may not come in the nature of a revelation, but it is a real and valid aspect of the lives that Negroes lead. One suspects, however, that the very frequency and sameness of the reports operate on the public mind as a bludgeon, numbing the hypothetical response; it may, indeed, be insisted that unless the report has the urgency of a revelation, the report is worthless.

Out of whatever motives, we have here, in effect, merely *the exploitation of an ugly reality.* Finally, we are shown nothing, we feel nothing, nothing is illuminated. The worthlessness of these novels consists precisely in that they supposedly expose a reality that in actuality they conspire to mask. For this is not the reality: the reality is more sinister, more treacherous, and more profound than this; and it is, above all, more personal. In none of the foregoing has it been my purpose to resurrect or exploit the ancient bogeyman of sex between the races, but only to inquire how and why in the first place it became a bogeyman at all, and why, if it has been exorcised, it exerts yet, as the sole breath of life in these ambitious novels, so ferocious and unmistakable a force. It is a question we are inclined to dismiss with jeers: that old stuff! But the question has not been answered and the failure is significant.

These novels have in common a subterranean assumption, unspoken by the emancipated, but living in our culture and apparently shared by the novelists themselves: the assumption that whiteness is a kind of salvation and that blackness is a kind of death. Beneath this assumption, like the dark, fantastic sub-plots on which these books rely, are the centuries of fear and desire and hatred and shame that are peculiarly the province of the Puritan Anglo-Saxon and which have made the oppression of black by white a more complicated reality than these novels indicate. The exploration of this reality may yet produce a very powerful literature; we are, in the meantime, confronted with a phenomenon not even remotely literary, which is only one more aspect of an enduring inability to face the truth.

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The Puzzle of Nationalism

MODERN NATIONALISM AND RELIGION. By SALO WITTMAYER BARON. New York, Harper, 1947. 363 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by GEORGE N. SHUSTER

NATIONALISM, like evolution, is one of those elements of the human social scene that are as intractable in fact as they are malleable in theory. Belonging to a nation is the result of a choice, to be sure, but the choosing is (if one may credit tradition) seemingly rooted in the nature of things and, like Hamlet's "to be or not to be," is an act of preferential decision to exist as a human being rather than as an uprooted abstraction. But just what is it that makes the man without a country different from his fellows? To ask the question is to indicate that nationality continues to be as difficult to define as it is seductively easy to describe. Professor Baron's lectures, originally delivered under the Rauschenbusch Foundation of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, do not rid the problem of its thorns. Yes, they no doubt render it even harder to handle by coupling nationalism with so vital and variable a matter as religion.

Dr. Baron is of course not the first writer to have been fascinated by this union. But there is no other book on the subject so broad in scope, so judicious and temperate of spirit, and so carefully supported by what one can only tritely call prodigious learning.

It would be unjust to say that Dr. Baron has read too much. As a matter of fact, almost every reader who has concerned himself with the subject will miss in the extensive bibliographical notes references to material that has seemed to him of signal value. Seen from one point of view, nationalism is so deadly a poison that no record of its virulence will seem adequate; and viewed differently, it may appear so elementary a group commitment that questioning its validity is comparable to inquiries into the value of kindergartens and baseball teams. Accordingly, one cannot help feeling that Dr. Baron's lectures are concerned with too vast a field. They deal with modern nationalistic thought, fascist and Communist doctrinaires, Catholic internationalism, Protestantism, Judaism, Eastern Orthodoxy. There are pages about Zionism, and allusions to Franco Spain. The reader will be escorted from Fichte to Maurras, to Pius XII, to Herzl, to Lenin. The sum total of these parts is, however, rather more of a bundle than a composition.

DR. BARON'S treatment of history is, to be sure, scholarly in the best sense. Many otherwise unimpeachable men have been convinced that the record of the past is of no value because they have been deluded by the estimate charlatans have placed upon it. The true historian therefore has the honor of his craft very much at heart. He knows how difficult to practice that craft is; and so he tends to be the most irenic and possibly also the most satirical of mortals because he is at one and the same time humble in the presence of unfathomable mystery—the mystery of the human will and its motives—and satirical by reason of the almost inevitable hiatus between man's commitments and the evidence on which these are based.

You may take as an illustration Dr. Baron's treatment of Charles Maurras, the protagonist of French reaction. He points out with subtlety, and sometimes with malice, the contradictions in this polemical writer's thought. Maurras never wished to admit that he believed in "race," despite his virulent and sometimes ludicrous anti-Semitism; and he insisted that he was a defender of Catholic tradition, even though everything he wrote indicates that for him Christianity was a kind of plague. But I think that Dr. Baron fails to grasp the phenomenon of *L'Action Française* because on the one hand he does not evaluate properly the significance of *L'Avenir de l'Intelligence* in the French writer's scheme of things, and because on the other hand he cannot believe that Pope Pius XI's repudiation of Maurras was a consequence of his concern with the survival of elemental Christianity. Dr. Baron has a marked reverence for the prudence of the Papacy, and this sometimes leads him to disregard the fact that the best pontiffs—and Pius XI was one of them—have thrown prudence to the winds when there was question of the Gospel. On the other hand, Maurras was terribly disturbed, as all humanists are, by the failure of democracies to conserve the aristocracy of the intelligence. This is assuredly a real problem. I should myself suggest that the true strength of nationalistic emotion is derived from the feeling that intellectual distinction results from the assiduous cultivation by a nation of its indigenous intellectual fields. Of these language is, perhaps, only a symbol.

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But let us look at the problem of nationalism as a whole. "Your people shall be my people, and your God shall be my God." That is a statement of choice hallowed by time. Must the "people" profess the same belief in the same God? Or does religious faith, held in common, take precedence over national ties? Or, finally, are patriotism and religion disparate things which must be kept apart? These have always been, in our Western world at least, fateful questions, and Dr. Baron deals with them in an admirably objective spirit. He can read himself into various states of mind with rare skill. It is with reluctance and some temerity that I conclude that what he comes up with finally is a simplification rather than a solution. He might properly reply, *tu quoque*, and I should have no answer.

Nationalism is for him the centrifugal force in history. It is that which breaks the human sum into fractions, and its disruptive power is greatly increased when religious fervor is blended with patriotism. Optimistically, he holds that apart from the centripetal energies crystallized in what we term the values of our civilization, there have latterly been set in motion currents leading to a new unity—technology for instance, which has made obsolete the small-scale tribal loyalties bred by dependence upon limited space areas. And above all, there is the United Nations, prelude to the oneness of the peoples and their governments, which appears now to give the established religions a new opportunity to lead humanity towards the moral solidarity which will ensure peace.

But whether the sense of national solidarity be based on an awareness of cultural community or upon so rudimentary a concern as security, its strength seems to derive from the fact that it gives those who subscribe to it a feeling that they belong to a worthwhile unity. Can international confederations awaken the same response? They undoubtedly could if a sufficient number of intellectual leaders felt that they provided a framework inside which the mind could feel at home. Such leaders might then even be in revolt against their own peoples, for the sake of the liberation of all the people. They might, perhaps, be Gandhis, fasting for the sake of humanity. But there is no evidence that such a feeling is even emerging; and therefore I do not believe that the spokesmen for the major religions, even if they themselves were persuaded that nationalism could now swiftly be superseded, could induce large numbers of people to transfer their loyalties to the United Nations.

If we ask why this should be so, we shall raise still another question which leads to the heart of Dr. Baron's analysis. Why have men like Fichte (or Hegel, who is dealt with too cursorily) been tempted to suggest that the state must profess a religion, and why have others, not always such egregious charlatans as Alfred Rosenberg, felt that the best religion was that which most effectively summarized their peoples' needs and views? It seems to me that the answer is that in the final analysis some moral values must be recognized as legal tender for the whole community. Thus we in America are saying that honesty is the irreducible minimum of our national ethic, and are basing our antagonism to the Communists on the fact that these are found to dissemble, to pose as what they are not, and to hide behind impermanent facades. Since there is no recognizable pragmatic sanction for even such values as honesty, the mention of them leads immediately to religion.

Well, it is perhaps because national ethical heritages are intertwined with religious beliefs —in an organic rather than a Fichtean sense— that men are so reluctant to abandon nationhood. Your statement that the next war means total destruction, or your contention that one world is preferable to a hundred worlds, does not carry conviction because the one world has no demonstrable ethical or religious tradition. Dr. Baron's book points by indirection to this difficulty. I can only wish that it had mapped out the problem more realistically and fully. It is to be hoped that this volume will be only the prelude to further studies, because there is certainly no one in this country so competent to pursue them as its author.

I shall add in conclusion some remarks which are not intended to be strictures—the field of nationalism is so vast and important that a long time must pass before it is mastered —but which I hope may serve as queries that will stimulate thought. There is first of all the matter of Christian resistance to Nazism. This has been summed up, in terms of both strength and weakness, in a magisterial article by Max Pribilla, which I regret Dr. Baron appears not to have seen. It is ironical, at any rate, that he should cite with approval one of the weakest of the German Catholic prelates, while leaving

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unmentioned the real lion of the household, who was the Bishop of Muenster. To say that there was no strong riposte to Rosenberg's *Mythus* is also to ignore the heroic efforts of anti-Nazi Bonn scholars, whose book was published at the peril of their lives and is not mentioned by Dr. Baron. And there is secondly the matter of the Anglo-Saxon Protestant religious heritage. Is this as much an affair of Calvinism as Dr. Baron suggests? Or is it not important to note the influence of Anglicanism, both in its 17th-century orthodox form and in the guise of Methodism? These are details, no doubt. But history is the fateful assembly of fragments. We may dispute among ourselves the pertinence of any part. But valuable history is the residue which remains after our disagreements have been resolved.

What Is a Traitor?

THE MEANING OF TREASON. By REBECCA WEST. New York, Viking, 1947. 307 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by R. W. FLINT

MISS WEST'S *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* was an exciting book; its journalistic qualities were offset by a kind of sympathetic passion for substance and character. Miss West is in her element explaining and poking fun at the simple constituent facts of modern nationhood. She knows what makes the Military military and her grasp of civil process is, in scope and color, in every way superior to the journalistic average. One is at a loss, therefore, to understand why this latest book should be so bad. Some initial sourness seems to have set the whole thing wrong. The kindest construction one could put on it, I think, would be to suppose that Miss West was bullied into making a tract for the times out of her group of unquestionably brilliant but superficial and makeshift on-the-scene reports.

Miss West wants to shock the modern liberal out of his drifting indifference to the facts of his natural life, but nothing in the book is more shocking than some of the conclusions she draws. She understands well enough why her traitors betrayed, but when she tries to tell us why we should interest ourselves in their fate, she merely canonizes, often at the dangerous level of eloquence, some of the most insidious fears and confusions of the liberal middle-class mind. One could hardly think of a worse time, from a practical rather than a speculative standpoint, to discover the "reality" of the idols of the tribe, or to preach to liberals the wholesome virtues of tribal allegiance. It is a form of conservative hysteria that has its uses, perhaps, in wartime; in time of peace, even so illusory a peace, one would rather see it confined to out-and-out fiction.

If we, the so-called community of liberal minds, had actually been so far violated by ideology as to be helpless during the last war, Miss West might have a case. The situation seems to have been quite otherwise, as it happens, whatever the rights and wrongs of the matter. It was still a war of the nations, if one of the last, and, taking everything into account, it was fought with noteworthy diffidence on our side, in a sort of tranced paralysis of the moral will. Exceptions are patent, but in general the spiritual issues were never drawn sharply enough to tempt treason in the grand style. Hence the dull object-material Miss West has to use as a basis for her sermon. Lionel Trilling has called her style in this book "anxious prose"—which is putting it, perhaps, a bit delicately. In fact, the book is often beside itself with the need to be sensational, to make each episode a final, deathless comment on the human condition. Her adoption into the Luce pantheon should remind Miss West of the solvent effect this kind of reporting can have on the moral imagination. She has developed an alarming and perhaps all-unconscious facility for cancelling out her moral, philosophical, and theological equations as she goes along.

OF HER victims, whom she worries like a cat roughing up a wounded mouse, only Mosley's one-time deputy William Joyce, *alias* "Lord Haw-Haw," and the atomic physicist Dr. Alan Nunn May, deserve serious attention. Joyce's character and career strongly resemble Hitler's—the same insane mixture of careerism and warped idealism—and a sober, if not very novel, political moral might have been drawn from the fact. But Miss West is out for bigger game. Joyce's trouble, in her eyes, stems chiefly from being "south the River," separated from the gentlemanly imperial London—by what?—as far as I could determine after sifting through her complex analyses, by his mouse-colored hair too sparse near the ears, his little crooked

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nose, his little pebbly eyes—in a word, by his impossible vulgarity.

This "pygmy," this "tiny little creature," however, as his story unfolds, seems to have most of the virtues that Miss West's middle-class vision embraces. He is a loved and affectionate son, a good husband to his second wife, a courageous man, ambitious and "idealistic," fiercely loyal to his dream of imperial integrity (he went to Germany only in order to return and help the Germans help the English), popular with the police (he kept his men under better control than the Communists), an honor student and a popular teacher. How to account for this person and his absurd, if sometimes charming, sense of destiny? Joyce, apparently, is a man who, in a great "age of faith," would have been harmless because "God" has a place in his civic dispensation even for fascists, and would have given Joyce the ultimate love and loyalty he craved and looked for vainly in secular politics. Thus *l'affaire Joyce* is scored off with suitable fireworks, but to what useful end for modern readers, Christian or otherwise, I am unable to see.

Dr. May, the scientist who turned atomic secrets over to a Russian agent, is easily the most sinister figure in the book and takes up the least space. Miss West, no less than the judges who tried him, is baffled almost speechless. H. G. Wells never warned us of this! (Or did he?) Faced by Dr. May, Miss West, the spokeswoman for middle-class decency and normality, oppressed by Freud, obscurely annoyed by the moral negativity of the last war, inoculated with a diluted Nietzscheanism, can only provide a reflection of the indecision of her time rather than an illumination of it.

What was it Lord Fitzurse said as he killed Thomas à Becket? "The traitor shall not rise again!" But traitors of Thomas's stature do reappear, to confound the miserable Mays and Joyces, and the easy rationalizations we draw from their careers. The question of treason is a good deal broader than Miss West seems to realize, until the last paragraph of her book, where she writes, almost by way of afterthought: "All men should have a drop of treason in their veins . . . ." Since Joyce was tried for offences against the Treason Act of 1351, it might not be amiss to consult a celebrated 17th-century authority:

Macduff's son: What is a traitor?

Lady Macduff: Why, one that swears and lies.

Son: And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

Lady Macduff: Every one.

Son: Who must hang them?-

Lady Macduff: Why, the honest men.

Son: Then the liars and swearers are fools; for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang them up.

Sepia for Sadness

Trial of a Poet, and other Poems. By Karl Shapiro. New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1947. 81 pp. $2.00.

Reviewed by Heinz Politzer

Basically an extrovert, Karl Shapiro would have society bear the brunt of his aggressiveness, which is, however, conditioned by his own insecurity. That is exactly what the long dialogue poem from which this book takes its title amounts to. Yet, whether as a self-evaluation or as a work of art, this longish piece is practically valueless. Behind a Miltonian motto it hides little more than the poet's feeling of utter disconnectedness. It is in fact a parlor discussion with some imagery — blurred daydreaming rather than clear-cut vision—plus some high-pitched prose, and choruses on the line of Auden's in "The Dog Beneath the Skin."

Undoubtedly, it is his relation to modern society that now puts so many of Shapiro's firm lyrical statements in the interrogative mood. It goes without saying that his consciousness of being determined by society has been accentuated, perhaps even over-accentuated, by his service in the army. Poems like "Homecoming," "Demobilization," or "The Conscientious Objector" bear this out, and their very titles mirror his fervently negative reaction to the state-controlled mass adventure: "Your [the CO's] conscience is What we come back to in the armistice."

As long as he confines himself to jotting down his personal reactions, the poet is in his own right. But it is not up to him to investigate his relationship with society, at least not so long as he writes poetry. Investigation implies a far greater amount of critical detachment than the creative processes of poetry would allow. The mission of the modern lyrical

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poet, from Shakespeare's sixty-sixth sonnet to Eliot's "Waste Land," and beyond, is to show the impress of society on the poet's ego rather than for the poet to typify and use himself as a sort of guinea pig in a pretendedly impartial treatise on "Social Behavior in the Contemporary Poet."

THUS, Shapiro is at his best when purely personal. In sixteen "Recapitulations" covering the time from his birth "under the roof where Poe expired" to his marriage, he gives a condensed and artistically competent diary of his inner life. Formally, he succeeds in applying and adapting to his purpose diversified lyrical patterns. He uses the chanty raised to the A. E. Housman level (XIV), a witty transformation of a German *Stundenlied* in two-lined stanzas (II), and the abridged scheme of Villon's *refrain* (X and XIII), thus integrating his cultural heritage into his personal account.

It is in this last sense that Shapiro's Jewishness appears. Unlike Delmore Schwartz, whose Jewishness is part and parcel of his intellectual background and a link in the chain by which he makes contact with Christianity and modern civilization, Shapiro tends to look upon his origins as upon a strange relic forsaken in an otherwise completely cultivated landscape. He feels bound to assert his Jewishness—and does so indeed on the very first page—cherishing it as one of the sources of his uneasiness as well as of his brilliance. But this time he fails to achieve the impact and simplicity of his earlier "Synagogue." Jewishness, too, has become a highly questionable subject, as shown in his epithalamium ("Recapitulations," XVI). Yet he does not want to flee from it. He still accepts it as the material for his creative conflict, as a thorn in his flesh which might, one day, become a thorn in the wreath wound round the temples of the living poet.

Now in his middle 30's, Karl Shapiro still writes verse that reminds one of Rainer Maria Rilke's *Glanz von einer leeren Seite, aus der noch alles werden kann* ("brilliance of an empty page, from which everything is still possible"). The most advanced among his poems—like the stirring pseudo-historical pageant, "Progress of Faust"—prove that his soul is still full of creative unrest and the sincere desire to break through tradition and those inhibitions which have been inherited, or acquired from the poet's ponderings over The Poet's attitude toward society. His vitality is unbroken by the spiritual exercise demanded by modern creation. His innate sense of color has not yet been dimmed by books and big city life. "And there is blue for night and red for fire—And sepia for sadness."

Eventually, he might very well find the solution within his poetic work, adding unabashed red and blue to the lingering sepia of his metropolitan melancholy.

Christian Theology and the Jews

CHRISTIANITY AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. By A. ROY ECKARDT. New York, King's Crown Press, 1948. 223 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by IRVING KRISTOL

MR. ECKARDT, who is an exponent of "neo-Reformation" Protestant Orthodoxy as preached by Paul Tillich and Reinhold and Richard Niebuhr, has chosen a difficult and delicate subject: With the decline of religious liberalism—whose central dogma was the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God—and the perceptible emergence of a new Christian orthodoxy, is there danger of a consequent spur to anti-Semitism? Will the emphasis upon Jesus as *the* Christ, rather than as one religious genius among many, inspire distrust and intolerance against those who reject this belief? And if so, on what grounds can—or must—a Christian oppose anti-Semitism?

Fortunately, the situation is not nearly so dangerous as these questions might indicate. Religious liberalism may have lost ground in recent years, and its prospects blanch slightly with each religious need it leaves unfulfilled and each religious question it insists upon ignoring—but it is still very powerful in American life. More important, one provision of its legacy which the new orthodoxy eagerly accepts is biblical criticism, even to the extent of discarding parts of the New Testament that have been demonstrated to be inauthentic. (This disposes of a vast amount of double-talk concerning the Crucifixion and who was to "blame.") Another provision is the desirability of toleration and goodwill in the secular world, and an awareness of the destructive potency of religious hatred. Because Mr. Eckardt is a

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responsible and well-wishing citizen of a democratic society, he wants Christian theology to eliminate every last niche in which the anti-Semite might take refuge.

With this in mind, he sees it as his task to supply a "theology for the Jewish question," to make it as consistent and meaningful as possible, and to distinguish it from the theologies of Orthodox Protestantism, Catholicism, and so on. This last is accomplished by distinguishing two kinds of Christian churches, the relativistic and the absolutistic, according to the emphasis they place upon their own special institutions or beliefs as prerequisites of salvation. Thus the Catholics, who equate church and truth, and the Orthodox Protestants, who equate Bible and truth, are absolutistic. On the other hand, religious liberalism and "neo-Reformation" Protestantism are relativistic because, while they insist that what they believe is true, they shy away from any claim to a monopoly of the truth; both possess, in some form or other, the concept of the "hidden Christ" who may be served by those not acknowledging the historical Christ.

THE theology that Mr. Eckardt arrives at makes no claim to omniscience, but rather states that "the Jews embody for us a transcendent *mystery*. . . . As in divine revelation, in which God is at the same time manifest and hidden—always remaining a mystery—so we are able to know something about the Jewish plight, but not *what* it is. . . ." The Jews are a chosen people (not *the* chosen people) with a divine message, a messianic vocation; they play a special role in the divine economy, testifying through all times for the eternal lord against the distortions of paganism—whether these take the form of an idolatry of the state, the church, the holy books, a nation, or a class. In performing this mission, the Jews incur the hostility of the would-be pagans, which breaks forth as anti-Semitism, taking a different form according to circumstance. In the medieval epoch, the Roman Catholic idolization of the temporal church gave rise to religious anti-Semitism; when the Nazis wished to do the same for the state, they regarded the Jews as their natural enemies.

This analysis is provocative (as well as extremely generous to Jewish sensibilities) and Mr. Eckardt buttresses it with painstaking research and close reasoning. There is no doubt in my mind that if the world thought as he did there would be no anti-Semitism. But I am also sure that there would be no anti-Semitism if all men thought as did John Dewey, Gandhi, or St. Francis of Assisi. The pragmatic test of a philosophy is what it turns out to be when it has filtered through the minds and emotions of the mass of men, and in this respect the possibilities of "neo-Reformation" Orthodoxy seem to have some ominous contours. Theology, whatever its special sociological or historical insights, is ultimately occupied with the relation of man to man and man to God. May not the attempt to incorporate within it, as a primary concept, the idea of "people" or "nation" (whatever it is that the Jews are), be the very first idolatrous act? Can there be any exception in theology to the universal identity of man that does not work to the disadvantage of man, theology,—and Jews? And this is as much the case where the premise of universal identity is granted, only to be whittled away by later, and apparently harmless or even well-intentioned, amendment.

The question remains: is there such a thing as a Jewish mission and a Jewish condition different from the human mission and the human condition? Or is Judaism only a unique experience of this condition, analogous and parallel to other unique experiences? To date, both Jewish and Christian thinkers seem content to whip both flanks of a paradox: they vilify the anti-Semite in the same breath that they point to his activities as necessary proof of the Jews' status as deputized representatives of God. This paradox is a standing challenge to responsible theology, and though it would be brash to insist on a quick and final resolution, it may not be presumptuous to ask that it be faced up to.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

JAMES BALDWIN is a young writer of growing reputation. He wrote "The Harlem Ghetto: Winter 1948" in the February COMMENTARY, and he is the author of a novel, tentatively entitled *Crying Holy*, which will be published by Viking this fall.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER, distinguished educator

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and scholar, is president of Hunter College. His latest books are *The English Ode from Milton to Keats* (1940) and *A Short History of Germany* (1945; written in collaboration with Arnold Bergstraesser).

R. W. FLINT is a graduate fellow at Harvard. He has contributed to *Kenyon Review*, *Partisan Review*, and various other periodicals.

HEINZ POLITZER recently came to this country from Palestine and is now on the staff of the Manumit School in Bristol, Pennsylvania. His latest article for COMMENTARY was "The World of Saul Steinberg," which was published in the October 1947 issue.

IRVING KRISTOL, assistant editor of COMMENTARY, will be remembered by our readers as the author of two articles discussing Judaism in terms of basic theological concepts: "The Myth of the Supra-Human Jew" (September 1947) and "How Basic Is 'Basic Judaism'?" (January 1948).

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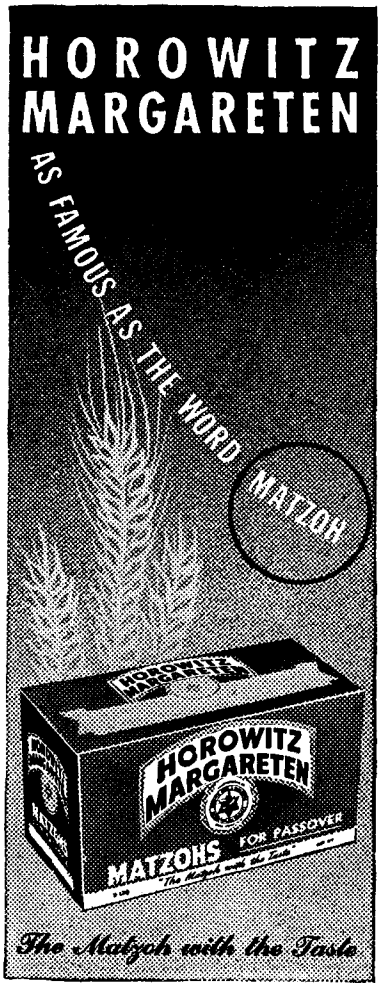

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